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Sermons Experimentall: ON PSALMES CXVI. & CXVII.

VERY VSEFVLL FOR A VVounded Spirit.

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Davidica intelligit qui Davidica sentit.

O come hither, and hearken all ye that feare God, and I will tell you what he hath done for my soul. *Psalm. 66. 16.*

LONDON,
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To the Reader.

Christian Reader,

AS from me these well meant Papers have been ingenuously imparted to the publike view, so bee thou intreated as ingenuously on thy part to give them welcome: I can indeed no otherwise call them mine, than as a labored transcription from a darke Originall hath made them so. 'Twas not for that I long'd to see my Name in Print, (the common surfeit of the Age) nor that I would pretend the eager importunity of others, the usuall Plea of most for this forwardnesse) but merely for the Vtility of their owne Matter, that I was so studious of their Evulgation; which I conceived to be most seasonable, for that the intention of them is not by any needlesse speculations to possesse the head, or any intricated Controversies (which like Rebekah's *Twinnes too often make a * Struggling in the Churches womb)*

* Gen. 25.22.

Wombe) to perplexe the braine, but by a sweet Devotion, in their fit Application, to salve, and cheere, and settle the heart. I have not seldome bestowed my thoughts upon the observation, how the licèt *on the one side, and the* fortasse *on the other, hath been too apt to breed that monster in the Theologie, or to use* Bernards *word,* * *Stultilogie rather of the vulgar multitude, that the best Religion is Neutrality, as if they minded to joyne issue with those Academicks of old, whose profession was to doubt of all things, but to resolve of nothing; or if as Meteors floating in the aire, they wave, not wholly in irresolutions, yet whiles the mind is fetch'd off from the* Scylla *of Superstition, instantly they are cast on the* Charybdys *of Prophanenes: Means they have, as* Esay's *waters that covered the Sea, overflowing, to (Know) the Truth; The cause of all these vitious propensions in them is that of Saint* Paul, *they do not (* Love) this Truth, to their Salvation: Upon which ground, that* * *Mirrour of Devotion hath informed us, that Gods Schoole consists as much, if not more, of Affection, than of Speculation. Wherfore to warme those cold affections, and to transform our Knowing to more (* Power) of Godlinesse; I thought good to offer to a generall perusall these pious Dictates of this Authors gray head, each of them having been first experimented in his owne soule, and actuated by his owne life: Let them make the same impression, which the latter words of a dying Saint (for such were these) are wont to make upon thee: And sith they shew themselves in publike but as*

Bernard. ep. 190 fol. 248. L. M.

Isa. 11. 9.

* 2 Thes. 2. 10.

* Bish. Hall.

* 2 Tim. 3. 5.

Post-

To the Reader.

Posthumes, *raised as it were out of almost eleven yeares obscurity, as* Lazarus *from the Grave, and so as He, they walke in vain simplicitie, but in their* * *Grave-cloaths onely, and seeme by reason of their long lodging in the dust, to resent something of the earth, and to need some spices of a trimmer and more polished vestment; Know, that hon beit the pencill was perchance bequeathd to me, yet because the Hand of that* Apelles, *which drew this picture into these first colors was absent; I durst neither my selfe adventure, nor suffer any else to bee dawbing, or painting on of any other, that might not bee right and proper to the lineaments of the originall Pourtrayour: Lay on but thine owne Christian Candor only, and all is well. In hope whereof I commit thee to the Lord, and am*

* Ioh. 11. 12.

Exon. Iun. 2. 1638.

Thine in our Common Saviour,

WIL. SCLATER.

Errata.

Pag. 33. *lin.* 25. *read*, rebounding. *p.* 35. *l.* 31. *r.* break. *p.* 46 *l.* 26. *r.* be we. *p.* 63. *l* 13 *r.* fervente st. *p.* 106. *l.* 10. *r.* infidelity. *p.* 108. *l* 22. *r.* rectified. *p.* 118. *l.* 31. *r.* ventrousnesse. *p.* 121. *l.* 24. *r.* weigh. *p.* 130. *l.* 21. *r.* constesie. *p.* 134. *l.* 20. *r.* Adiaphoris. *p.* 135. *l.* 31. *r.* vowed. *p.* 153 *l.* 25. *r.* intolerable. *p.* 172 *l.* 15. *r.* initiation. *p.* 173 *l* 31 *r.* ought. *p.* 177 *l.* 5. *r.* misunderstanding. *p.* 178. *l.* 9. *r.* on. *p.* 190. *l.* 14. *r.* in mercie.

PSAL. 116. verſ. 1, 2.

I love the Lord, becauſe he hath heard my voyce, and my ſupplications; becauſe he hath enclined his eare unto me; therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.

THe time of the Pſalme, implying the occaſion of compoſing, ſeemes to have been, after the bringing of the Arke from the houſe of Obed-Edom, to the City of *David*; ſee 2. *Sam.* 6. and 1. *Chron.* 15. this is evident, *verſ.* 18, 19. It ſeemes alſo not long after, if ye compare the promiſe of *David* to pay his Vowes, *ver.* 13. with the burnt offrings and peace offrings made by *David*, 2 *Sam.* 6. 17, 18, 19. and 1 *Chron.* 16. 1, 2, 3. What time it ſhould ſeeme, he tooke new occaſion to recount the many mercies the Lord had vouchſafed him, in delivering him from ſo many inextricable dangers, ſo long, as to ſee himſelfe ſeated in quiet poſſeſſion of the Kingdome over all Iſrael; and the Arke and Tabernacle ſeated in *Ieruſalem*.

The ſumme and ſcope ſeemes to expreſſe the fruits and gracious effects Gods favours experimented had in him; as Firſt, Increaſe of Love,

*ver.*1. Secondly, Vow of sincere obedience, or confidence, *ver.*9. Thirdly, Publike profession of his Name, *ver.*10. Fourthly, Celebrating with prayses, and all testimonies of thankefulnesse, the glory of Gods Grace, Justice, Mercy in his mighty deliverances: who doubts? but withall to stirre up the people, and to informe them of their duties, in case of like favour vouchsafed them of God.

In the two first verses is expressed a publike profession, and protestation of his love to God increased, the first gracious fruit of Gods favour towards him; Wherein considerable are, First, The Matter of the protestation, *I love*, Secondly, The intentive, or Motive, *He hath heard*. Thirdly, The issue, and farther Consequent, *I will call on him as long as I live.*

Vers. 1. *I love*: Hebr. *Ahabti*: Septuagint, ἠγάπησα: *vatablus dilexi*: but Smatterers in the Originall know preter-tense denotes *actum continuum*, and signifies present, as well as past acts: *Iunius*, *Sat in beo*. boldly, and without example. The object of love whereto this act passeth, is not expressed, but easily supplyed out of *ver.* 4,5,6. *Him* he meanes, who had heard his Prayers, whose stile is some were [a] *the hearer of Prayers*, the Gracious, Just, and Mercifull God, *ver.* 5.

[a] Psal.65.2.

I love: The affection of Love we better experiment, then are able to expresse in definition Nominall, or Reall: It seemes to comprise. First, *Complacentiam*, the pleasing, and delightfull approbation of the person, or thing loved; see *Mat.*3.17 ἐν σοὶ εὐδόκησα, see *Psal.* 139.17. Secondly, *Benevolentiam*,

nevolentiam, heartiest well-wishing, and desire of their good and welfare. Thirdly, *Oblectationem*, delight-taking in the thing loved; 1 *Sam.* 19. 2. *confer.* 1 *Sam.* 18. 1, 3. *Gen.* 34. 3, 19. and in all things wishing good unto it. Fourthly, *Desiderium fruendi*, Gen. 34. 8. *Cæteri actus, ut benefacere, &c. videntur actus amoris imperati.* Fiftly, *Adhærentiam*, A cleaving to the thing beloved, *Gen.* 34. 3.

This then it is that *David* professeth. First, That he found pleasure, and delight in the Being, Attributes, Workes of God, of Power, Justice, Mercy, Injunctions, Prohibitions, &c. Secondly, That it did his Soule good to contemplate on him. Thirdly, How much he desired, that he might have all contentment amongst the sonnes of men, in their acknowledgment and procuring of his glory; Wherein though no accesse of Reall good can be made unto God, yet is it *bonum æstimatum*. Fourthly, How for his part his Soule cleaved unto God. Fiftly, How he longed for the fruition of him.

I love the Lord: Oh Si! Oh that there were such hearts in us, that we could every one say as *David*, with *Davids* spirit, upon his evidence, *I love the Lord*: t'were more worth, then all these; First, to know all Secrets. Secondly, to Prophecy. Thirdly, to move Mountaines, &c. 1 *Cor.* 13. 1, 2. *&c.* *I love the Lord*; It's more, then I know the Lord, for even Castawayes are [a] enlightned; More, then I feare the Lord, for Devils feare him, unto [b] trembling; More, then I [c] pray to God; What should I say? More, then all Services, then all Vertues separate from Charity: truly say the Scholes,

[a] Heb. 6. 4.
[b] Iam. 2. 19.
[c] Isa. 1. 15.

Charity is the forme of all Vertues, becauſe it formes them all to acceptability, for that nothing is accepted but what iſſues from Charity, from the love of God.

Obiect. Who cannot ſay it? *Anſ.* And I aske, Who
Anſw. doth, or can doe it? I meane, with *Davids* truth: Wouldeſt thou love them that hate the Lord? 2 *Chron.* 19.2. Enter affinity, league of amity with an Idolater? Wouldſt thou entertaine as thy familiars, men enemies to God, and all goodneſſe, *Pſal.* 139.21. ſhould ſuch tarry in thy houſe? *Pſal.* 101.4,7. Wouldſt thou haunt their company? *Ier.* 15.17. *Pſal.* 26 4.5. Shew them the leaſt countenance? 2 *Kings* 3.14. Give them a God ſpeed? *Ioh.* Secondly, Wouldſt thou hate them that love God? *Tim.* 3.3. *Amos* 5.15. μισήσατε cannot be φιλῆσαι, or διώξατε; and that for goodnes, becauſe they love God? 1 *Ioh.* 3.12. Thirdly, Haſt thou the Worlds good, and ſeeſt thy brother in need? yet ſhutteſt up thy bowels of compaſſion towards him? how dwells the love of the Father in thee? 1 *Ioh.* 3.17. *Gal.* 6.10. Fourthly, Couldeſt thou delight in the diſhonor of the Name of God? *Pſ.* 119.136,158. Fiftly, Could the noiſe of his approach to judgement, and thy full fruition of him be ſo unwelcome? ſee *Act.* 24.25. *Luk.* 21.28. 2 *Tim.* 4.8. Sixthly, Could meanes of Union with him be ſo unwelcome? as *Amos* 8.5. *Pſal.* 42. and 84. throughout. Seventhly, Couldeſt thou turne the grace of God into wantonneſſe? *Iud. v.* 4. and therefore be Vitious becauſe the Lord is Gracious? ſee *Pſal.* 130.4. *Hoſ.* 3.5. Eightly,

Would

Would every scoffe of a jeering Ishmaelite drive thee from the service of God? see *Cant.* 8. 6. *Act.* 5. 41. *Heb.* 11. 26.

Ninthly, Wouldest thou in thy necessity flie to any rather then to thy best friend? What, to a Witch? 1 *Sam.* 28. 7. to an Idoll, a Devill? 2 *Kings* 1. 2. from the living to the dead? *Isa.* 8. 19. Certainly, its *Vox Sanctorum propria*, The * peculiar property only of Saints, to say, I love the Lord. Wherefore *David* directeth his speech to Saints, as hoping amongst them the exhortation might have place, *Psal.* 31. 23.

* See Heb. 6. 4, 5, 6. 2 Thes. 2. 12. Ephes. 3. 18.

Reasons make it plain. First, They onely see the depth of that misery, which sinne brings with it; I mean not the pains onely, and punishments, which reprobates also sometimes feel, but the want of the image of God, the misery that is in necessity of sinning, *Rom.* 7. 24. Secondly, They onely have the feeling of Gods love * shed abroad in their hearts; I mean, in remission of sinnes, reconciliation, &c. see 1 *Ioh.* 4. 19. Thirdly, They onely comprehend the greatnesse of Gods love in Christ, *Ephes.* 3. 8.

* Rom. 5. 5.

Take evidences, they are infinite. First, Who but they fear to offend him? *Ier.* 32. 40. Secondly, Who but they care to please him? *Psal.* 40. 8. Thirdly, Who but they grieve at his dishonour? 2. *Pet.* 2. 8. Fourthly, Who but they take to heart the tokens of his displeasure? As they are such; therefore saith *David*, *Psal.* 51. 4. *Against thee, thee onely have I sinned, &c.*

So that make sure to thy self thy charity, thy *Vse.*

love of God; thou makest sure to thy self for ever, thy election, thy calling, thy justification, adoption, sanctification, salvation, &c. other gifts are in a sort all common, this peculiar to Saints.

Quest. Two questions here fall in. First, Whether nature affords no love of God? that is, Whether a naturall man, as such, cannot love him?

Answ. I could here minde you of the severall distinctions Scholemen reckon up of love: Thus I resolve, No naturall man can love God *Propter se*, that is, for Gods self sake, for his own sake he may Concupiscentially, and as a Mercenary: or as others say, Nature affords love of God, perhaps *Vt Authoris Naturæ, non item ut Authoris æternæ beatitudinis*: that is, as of the Authour of Nature, but not as of the Authour of eternall happinesse, which is properly Concupiscentiall, not the love of Amity, see *Iudg.* 17.13.

Quest. The second quære is, Whether it be possible to know that we love God?

Answ. Some Papists deny it, if we speak *De certitudinali scientia*, of the knowledge of certainty, and of that under which there cannot be *falsum*: But yet *David* could say, as upon certainty, I love the Lord: and why not we, having the * same Spirit of faith, and charity? Secondly, The Spirit of God is given us, that we may * know the things that are given us of God; and not to know charity the prime of all vertues? the * bond of perfectnesse? Thirdly, Scriptures, many are written to this end, that we may * know we have eternall life, Conjecturally onely think you? and not

* 2 Cor.4.13.
* 1 Cor.2.12.
* Col.2.14.
* 1 Ioh.5.13.

as

as upon certainty, or upon what better evidence, then our charity? Fourthly, Grace perfects Nature, destroys it not; I mean in naturall faculties; and sith this is naturall to the reasonable soul, to know its own motions, and actions, and inclinations, (as themselves confesse there is *Actus reflexus*) whether the motion be naturall, or supernaturall; yet by the native, and imbred faculty of the soul, a man knows, or may know the motions of it. Fiftly, Grace indeed is a stranger to Nature, yet so, that when it hath place, it over-rules, and domineers over Nature, and curbs the inclinations, and propensions of it: Thus usually it seems, A neighbour whom we every day see, we notice not so much, because we know him: but let a stranger come amongst us, and meddle but a little as a * controuler, every mans eyes are upon him, and scarcely one action of his escapes without our notice: so, &c. I hope ye can apply. Sixthly, And why not as well as my knowledge, or my faith, which themselves say, a man may upon certainty discern in himself? These are acts of the understanding. As who would say, the minde onely did know, and take notice of the acts of the understanding, and not of those of the will, affections, senses, body; when for all, or any of these in evill, we are sure it directs us; and trow we, in good it directs us not?

* See Gen. 19. 9.

Object.

Answ.

Principium charitatis, the fountain of charity, that is, God is unknown, therefore neither charity possible to be known?

Object.

So is also the fountain of faith, which is *Veritas prima*,

Answ.

prima, the first verity, or truth, unknowne also to us, yet that we may know, by their own confession; Why not *Principium charitatis*, the beginning and fountain also of charity? Yea, and that with a knowledge of certainty, though that certainty indeed be not altogether perfect, and compleat. Hold it then for a truth, Its possible to know that we love God; as well as that we know, or fear, or beleeve, or obey God: And in that perswasion, addresse thy self to make the love of God known to thy self. Notes hereof are;

Notes of the love of God.

First, Where the true love of God is, there do all other loves vanish; love of pleasures, profits, honours, life, &c. in comparison of God: my meaning is, hadst thou rather *part with all these, then with thy God? I dare say, thou truly lovest him. Secondly, How art thou affected to the Image of God, shining in his children? Doth that draw thy affection? that is, Dost thou love them, * because they resemble God in holinesse, and purity, and mercy, and patience? My soul for thine, thou art thereby a seed of God, as is said of *Abraham*. Thirdly, How art thou affected toward the Commandments of God, and the duties that he enjoyns thee in them? Canst thou say, as *David*, Oh my God, I am * content to do it, I delight to do it; at least, are they not grievous, or * burdensome to thee? Go over the whole world of Aliens, thou mayest see them sometimes doing, and keep doing, but thinkest thou with * delight? Fourthly, How art thou affected towards the signes of Gods favour, or disfavour? Doth this glad

*Mat.10.37.

* 1 Ioh.5.1. and 1 Ioh.3.14.

*Psal.40.8.

* 1 Ioh.5.3.

* See Am.8.5. & Mal.1.13.

glad thee above all, that he is pleased to lift up the light of his * countenance upon thee? Doth this vex thee? That the Lord takes from thee the signes of his love; A token infallible, that thou lovest him. And thus farre of the matter of *Davids* Protestation, *I love the Lord.* * Psal. 4.6,7.

Now follows the Motive, or Incentive; *Because he hath heard my voice, & my supplications.* How comfortable is it to the soul, that Gods favours to us inflame our affections towards him, *Psal.* 130.4. There is mercy with thee, therefore thou shalt be feared: Oh blessed soul that can so say! And marvell not that I call upon you to prove love; for surely, fear to offend, or displease, is the soundest token of love to our God, 2 *Cor.* 5.14. The love of Christ, wherewith he loved us, constraineth us: Oh, *Fœlix necessitas*, blessed necessity that compells us to do our Saviour service! Surely, *Non sic impii, non sic*, With the wicked it is not so: God is mercifull, therefore they will be sinfull.

See then how the favours of God affect thee; whether they be as the cords of his love to draw thee to obedience, and to inflame thy affection; if so, thou hast more in thee then all the rabble of reprobate hypocrites: Yet understand me aright; I say not, but there are some favours, and benefits of God, that may allure a Castaway to do him service. But first, Not every favour, but what humours the affection predominant, as if it be wealth, pleasure, &c. Secondly, Not to love him, but to do him service, as a Mercenary; *Vse.*

therefore observe in such men, when the Lord crosseth them in what they sought in his service, they are ready to blaspheme him to his face; see *Mal.*3.14. Thirdly, There are favours of God, that through commonnesse grow vile, and but by want have not their price seen, as subjection of creatures, *Psal.*8.6,*&c.* But is it a speciall favour? A privilege? That ravisheth, and therein cannot a childe of God satisfie himself whiles he extolls it; therfore see by all circumstances, how he loves to augment it; let such as love thy salvation, say continually, *Let God be* * *magnified*; see what titles *David* rejoyceth to set upon Gods favours, * Loving kindnesse, Faithfulnesse, Righteousnesse, Wonders: read also, *Rom.*5,6,7,8. and 1 *Tim.* 1, 12,13,14.*&c.* Surely the least favours of God affect his children to inflame affection; if it be but a* desire to fear his Name; if it be but a * lusting against the flesh; Oh yet, because it is a token of Gods love, because it is more then they have deserved; for this they love God. But is it a spirituall blessing? A blessing, that concerns life, and* godlines? With these worldlings are not at all affected, *Ps.*4.6. the reason is, because they see not, nor* can see the excellencie, or worth of them; No, this is *Privilegium justorum*, the priviledge onely of Saints, to prize Adoption, as Saint* *Iohn*, admiring therein the abundant greatnesse of Gods love to his soul in Christ Jesus; to say, as Saint* *Peter* of faith; yea, of tryall of faith, its much more precious then gold: This is *Privilegium justorum.*

* Psal 70.4.

* Psa.8?.10,11, 12.

* Neh.1.11.

* Gal 5.17.

* 1 Pet.1.3.and Ephes.1.3.

* 1 Cor.2.14.

* 1 Ioh.3.1.

* 1 Pet.1.18.

Object. But is this such a matter, to be drawn with the cords

cords of love, to love God? Is there in it any thing supernaturall?

There are *four degrees of loving God. First, *Ut bonus sit nobis*, that he may be good to us, this Mercenary; see *Judg.7.13.* Secondly, *Quia bonus fuit*, because he hath been good unto us, this *gratitudinis*, matter of thankfulnesse to Almighty God. Thirdly, *Quia bonus in se*, because he is good in himself, and in his own nature most amiable. Fourthly, When neither our selves, nor ought that is ours is loved, but *Propter Deum*, so farre as it hath reference to the glory of God, not life, not * salvation it self; this is *Intensi*, *Amoris Divini*, and they must be as Saint *Paul*, and *Moses*, extraordinary servants of God, who aspire to this measure. But the question is of the second of these degrees mentioned; and surely, if we look to the state of the world, this we shall finde; that either the favours of God move not, because they are not apprehended as his favours, but rather as things that betide them by course of nature, or fortune; or if they work any way, it is in *Pejus*, making them the more to * despise God. But if the question be *De possibili*, what nature elevated above it self, by grace may ascend unto, the solution is more difficult. First, Nature it self may be directed that there is *Debitum*, that they owe, as a Debt, love to God for his favours; therefore we see Barbarians much affected at *Pauls* speech, *Act.14.17,18.* Secondly, We read of sundry testimonies of thankfulnesse amongst Heathens, after good things received, as victory,

*Answ.

*Bern. de diligendo Deo.

*Rom.9.3. and Exod.32.32.

*Rom.1.4. and Iud.ver.4.

health, &c. To *Apollo*; who howsoever they erred touching God, yet in universality they erred not; they meant it to that *Numen*, that they thought Authour of their good successe: and surely, we cannot be too nice, and curious in examining our gracious estate in this particular; for it is marvellous difficult to distinguish betwixt the lowest degree of grace, and the highest of nature; especially in gifts that are made Distinctive and Characteristicall, we shall finde the Devill cunning in counterfeiting, & I am perswaded there is many a Christian thorowly perswaded of his faith, and love towards God, who yet erres in his perswasion; that is an excellent evidence that *Salomon* give us, *Cant.* 8. 7. When many waters cannot quench it, no opposition stint it, &c. But fourthly, Is the question of spirituall blessings, and of the true God? Surely the naturall man hath no rellish of them; to wit, so far as they are *spirituall: but as they tend to winne him reputation, or honour, &c. amongst men, as *Simon* * *Magus*; or as the Persians became * Jews; or else secondly, onely whiles they enjoy the blessings temporall, which they prize the onely blessings of God; therefore let the Lord turn the course of outward things, its true of them what the Devill slanderously imputed to *Iob*, they are ready to* curse him at his face, see *Mal.* 3. 14. *Mat.* 13. 21. But shew me the man amongst the many millions of naturalists, of *Iobs* minde, *Cap.* 1. 21. and 2. 10. as *Heb.* 10. 34. as Apostles, *Act.* 5. 41. or but as *David*, to see, and feeling-

* 1 Cor 2.14.

* Act.8.18.19.
* Hest.8.17. see Psal.4.6.

* Iob 1.11.

ly

ly to acknowledge a goodnesse in affliction, *Psal.* 119. 68, 71.

Because he hath heard my voice, and my supplications, that is the voice of my supplications. What great matter of love is this? for doth not the Lord hear the prayers also of wicked men, and grant their petitions? *Psal.* 78. 34, 35. *Neh.* 9. 27. What should hinder us to say, the Lord hears the prayers, grants the requests of wicked men? Why not? as well as respect the repentance of * *Ahab*, so farre as to grant respit of the evill. First, It is in temporall things onely, which come * alike to all; but do they pray pardon of sinnes, salvation of souls? Then see *Mat.* 7. 22, 23. *Mat.* 25. 11, 12. *Pro.* 1. 28. Secondly, It cannot be denyed, but that God in his love, and approbation of things that are good in their kinde, though evill by accident in the doers, grants some such rewards to evill men: Its *Austins* opinion, that the Lord therefore prospered the Romans, during their strict observance of temperance, justice, and such like morall vertues, gave them amplitude of Dominion: the just Lord loveth righteousnesse, yea, so loves it, that he rewards the shadow of it, as in *Achab*. Thirdly, this would be weighed; that the Lord is ever * mindfull of his covenant, and for it made with the fathers, sometimes doth good to the children, see *Neh.* 9. Fourthy, Amongst the congregations of wicked men, in the Church especially, are some, who intreat for the sinnes of the people: *David* tells of *Moses* standing in the gap, our Saviour, *Lu.* 13. 8

Quest.

Answ.

* 1 Kings 21. 29.

* Eccles. 9. 2.

* Psal. 111. 5.

Fiftly, It is for his own Names ſake, *Deut.* 32.26, 27. *Exod.*32.12,13,14.

Queſt. How then, and in what reſpect is it true, that it is a ſpeciall favour of God, to hear the prayers of his Saints.

Anſw. First, So generally in all things, that they call upon him for, *Deut.*4.7. Secondly, To gratifie them, and to be inclined by their prayers to grant; ſo God hears not the wickeds prayers, but onely the prayers of his Saints. Others, First, For generall mercy, they are his creatures. Secondly, His Church, to whom promiſes many are made. Thirdly, To prevent blaſphemy, &c.

Object. What ſay we to thoſe places? *Iſa.*1.15. *Ioh.*9.31. *Pro.*15.8. in which, & the like places, it is ſaid, That God wil not hear the prayers of the wicked?

Anſw. They are to be underſtood; First, Of ſome exorbitants amongſt ſinners; as * Sodomites. Secondly, Or of their prayers in * extremity. Thirdly, Or of the bleſſings which concerne life, and * godlineſſe. But what, when yeelded a common bleſſing? Is therein no cauſe of love? ſee *Mat.*5.45. and *Act.*14.17.

* Gen.13.13.

* Prov.1.26,27, 28.

* 2 Pet.3.3,4.

Vſe. But therefore is *Davids* heart inflamed to the love of God, becauſe he had heard his prayers: Oh that there were ſuch hearts in us! How many praiers of ours hath the Lord heard? We have prayed for the continuance of the Goſpel, yet it continues; removall of the Plague, in part he hath heard us, mitigating the extremity of it; that ſhould follow, God grant it may. Therefore our love of God is more increaſed; my meaning is

We

We are, First, more carefull to please him. Secondly, More fearfull to offend him. Thirdly, More zealous for his glory. Fourthly, More fill our mouthes with his praise. Fiftly, And make straiter steps to our feet, or else, how shall we be able to say, that we now fear not some greater evill that way, or shall betide us? *Ioh.* 5. 14. else, how shall we be able to say, the Lord in favour of us hath heard our prayers? With me, this goes for a rule to judge, whether God in mercy grant me things I pray for, doth it tend to my spirituall good, advancing Gods grace in my heart? Then say I, God in mercy, and of speciall favour hath heard my prayers; But am I the worse for what I obtain? or not the better? how do I fear, left the Lord hath heard me as * Israelites desiring flesh, when leannesse was withall sent into their souls. * Psal. 106. 15.

There are three things that hinder such motions of love to our God. First, That many scarcely acknowledge any work of providence in swaying these outward things; supposing all guided by nature or fortune. Secondly, That we look not through second causes to the chief, and principall sender, whose but instruments these are, *Hab.* 1. 16, 17. And we in part the like, as if the vigour of the disease because of Nature stayed; or as if the cold of the time were the onely cause of mitigation; whereas if we would speak, or think as Christians, we should see God in the means. Thirdly, The proud opinion of merit, if any thing in the world, overthrows it; I shall never

ver beleeve any Merit-monger doth, or can think himself beholding to God, for any his favours bestowed on him; for while he thinks he hath obliged God unto him by his devotion, how doth he not rather think, God ows him thanks, rather then himself any way indebted unto him? But that our hearts may the better be stirred up to the Duty, Consider we, First, our no-merits; our *Merita mala*; yea, how stained the very prayers we made were, with manifold blemishes, as doubtings of obtaining, coldnesse of affection, &c. Secondly, See misery of the want. Thirdly, Preferment God hath given thee in it. Fourthly, The sweetnesse in enjoyment passeth all treasures, *Cant.* 8. 8. The whole substance given, for love, would be contemned; surely it is something that * *Balaam* said, if *Balak* would give me his house full of gold and silver, I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord; yet said the Apostle of him, he * loved the wages of unrighteousnesse, and ran greedily after the * reward; power of providence restrained; but when Will restrains, and we so highly prize Gods favour, that for no thing, never so precious, we will adventure his offence, this is supernaturall. Lastly, All things work together for the good of them that * love God.

* Numb.22.18.

* 2 Pet.2.15.

* Iud.ver.11.

* Rom.8.28.

VERSE.

VERSE. II.

Because he hath enclined his ear unto me; therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.

THis Verse containeth another part of that fruit, that the mercy of God brought forth in him; A Vow of limiting his Devotions to God: wherein are two things observable. First, The matter of it. Secondly, The incentive, or motive. In the first, take notice of the thing resolved of, Invocation of Gods name. Secondly, The time, *In diebus meis*, in my dayes, as the Hebrew bears it, or as it is rendred in our last & best Translation, *As long as I live.* Secondly, The motive is, because he hath inclined his ear unto me.

Because he hath inclined his ear. Take heed ye here conceive nothing grosly of the Godhead, as if he had any such fleshly, or bodily member, as eye, or ear, &c. God is a * Spirit, a substance * incorporall, immateriall; but as *David* teacheth to interpret, hereby he signifies, not the instrument, but the faculty and ability to do what by these bodily organs we perform, *Psal.* 94. 9. The inclining of the ear, signifies the bending of our best attention to take notice of what is spoken; for such gesture we use, when we desire thorowly to understand what is said to us; see *Psal.* 45. 10. *Pro.* 22. 17. *Psal.* 86. 1. it is that, with *Psal.* 130. 2. he calls attentivenesse of the ear: yet withall somewhat else is imported; namely, the Lords demitting,

* Ioh. 4. 24.
* Luke 24. 39.

demitting, and humbling himself so low, as to take notice of his petitions, *Prov.* 22.17. and *Ier.* 7.26. and 25.4. *Pro.* 5.13. As if he had said, Sith the Lord hath pleased so low to demit, & humble himself, as to attend to my prayer, therefore, &c. And certainly it is a matter of marvell, as to me it seemes, that the great God of heaven and earth, should stoop so low, as to regard the prayers of the sonnes of men; so every where it is accounted by Saints; and they are a little astonished at the wonderfulnesse of it; so *David*,* who is like the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high, and yet humbleth himself to behold the things in heaven and earth! And observe *Davids* stile of this mercy of God to men, expressing ever matter of wonder, as *Psal.* 107. 6,8. and 19. 21. and 28.31. compare *Psal.* 102. 17,18,19,20. and 17. 6,7. shew thy marvellous loving kindnesse, *Ps.* 31. 21, 22. he hath shewed me his marvellous loving kingdnesse, because he heard the voice of my supplications. And certainly, if ye please to compare the greatnesse of Gods Majestie, First, with the infirmity of man in his best estate. Secondly, With his quality as it is now depraved. Thirdly, Considering the quality of our prayers. Fourthly, The preferment we have in it above Angels; ye will see in it mercy no lesse then marvellous. See *Salomon* admiring it, 1 *Kings* 8. 27. But will God indeed dwell on the earth? *Vox admirantis, non dubitantis*; behold, Heaven of heavens cannot contain thee: yet wilt thou here manifest thy presence by hearing prayers? What

* Psal 103.5.6.

is

is * man? and who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer? &c. *confer. v.12.* but consider him as depraved, the wonder grows yet more marvellous, as it is amplified, *Ps.*107.6, 8, 19, 21. that the Lord should humble himself so low as to hear prayers of sinfull man, provoking him daily with his sins: And what prayers? full of doubtings, wanderings, coldnesse of affection? &c. and see our preferment. First, Above Angels, as *Heb.* 2. 14. for hither also may that amplification be referred. Secondly, To other men not of the Church; *Deut.* 4. 7. what nation so great, to whom God comes so nigh, as the Lord our God to us in all that we call unto him for? * Psal.8.4.and 1 Chron.29.14.

Do we enquire reason of it? None can be given, save this onely, *Deut.* 10. 15. φιλανθρωπία τοῦ Θεοῦ, *Tit.*3.4. the love of God to man, and there is no marvell, if that love of God to man, amongst all Gods loves hath its speciall name: φιλοστοργία, φιλαγγελία, &c. are not read, but φιλανθρωπία, from his specialty of favour is this.

Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodnesse, and declare the wonders that he doth for the sonnes of *Adam*! How can we amplifie the kindnesse of great men? of Kings, as * *Haman*; nay, if it be a farre meaner man, a Basket-justice, or a petty Gentleman, that vouchsafeth us a greeting, or grants a request, how pride we our selves in it? How do we never satisfie our selves in praising their courtesie, their affability, their humility? And yet they do but duty; are men of our own mould, subject to * like passions *Use.* * Hest.5.11,12. * Iam.5.17.

as we: Oh that there were such hearts in us towards our God, who is so ready to hear us! that King of kings, and Lord of lords, whose dwelling is in the heavens, yet humbleth himself to take notice of our prayers; and who comforts us exceedingly against that temptation of Satan, taken from consideration of our own unworthinesse, and it is that that oft dismayes from duty; Grace is sometimes over modest; For, first, God commands it. Secondly, Promiseth to accept it, *Psal.* 50. 15. Thirdly, Christ mediates, *Revel.* 8. perfumes our prayers. Fourthly, Upbraides no man, *Iam.* 1. 5. This armes us also against that pretense of Papists, for invocation of God by Saints; we are not worthy? and with Princes we deal not so? yet God loves to be so dealt withall, he humbleth himself, *Psal.* 65. 2. and 113. 6. And this should teach the proud, and haughtiest upon earth, to imitate their Maker, and not to slight petitions from meanest creatures: in spirituall things it is true, there is neither bond, nor free, all are * one in Christ Jesus, yet in outward state God hath exalted one above another; that it is a wonder, how the heart of many is so swoln with pride, and haughtinesse, that a poor man may not speak unto them! Oh dust and ashes, proud worms-meat, gilded potsheard, art thou more lofty, and higher then the Highest? Yet humbleth he himself to the cry of the poor, &c. So let us go, and do likewise.

* Col. 3. 11. Iam. 2. 5.

Therefore will I call upon him. So *David* thinks himself much obliged unto God, because he would

would vouchsafe him audience. Is it not then a strange inversion Romanists have made? God is obliged unto them, because they pray unto him; so farre beholden, that for this that they pray, he must in justice pardon sinnes, and accept it as satisfaction for other defects? *Mentior*, if this be not their doctrine, that praier is a work of satisfaction, making Gods justice amends for their other things amisse. I know what they talk of the painfulnesse that is in it, and of the charity that forms it; but this I would fain know for my learning: First, Who is it that hath benefit by our prayers? God, or we? Whose necessities are supplyed? Gods or ours? What, when we reap benefit by prayers, God * none, shall we think the Lord beholden unto us? Secondly, Who is it that gives hearts to pray? If *Paul* say true, we know not what, or how to pray as we ought, except Gods * Spirit help our infirmities; Who are we, that we should be * able to offer so willingly? saith *David*; and who are we, that we should be able to pray so fervently, so devoutly, so faithfully? Thirdly, Nay, in our best prayers, are there not doubtings, waverings, wanderings, coldnesse of affection, yea * pollutions? and yet forsooth, God is beholden to us that we will pray to him, not we to him for his grace in hearing. Fourthly, Is it not *Debitum*? have we not a mandate to pray? suppose it be with greatest devotion, with longest continuance, yet is it not commanded? How then, say they, we make amends for other sinnes by praying? as if the creditour were be-

* See Iob 35. 7.

* Rom. 8. 26.

Zech. 12. 10.

* 1 Chro. 29. 14

* Isa. 64. 6.

holden to his debtour, for that he payes his mite, when he ows his talent.

But we return to *David*; Not God to him for praying, but he to God is beholden for hearing; and so farre, as that now he bindeth himself to limit his devotion to God, so long as he lived.

The question a new is raised; Whether it bee lawfull to vow a commanded duty? Why doubt we? It is a duty to limit our devotion, our religion to God, yet *David* vowes it; suppose you, he sinned in it? elsewhere, he swears to keep Gods righteous judgements; did he sinne, or supererogate? Surely such vows have this good use to Gods children; they ever increase the obligation to performance, and make more fearfull to offend.

But let us see the meaning of the words. First, The thing he vows, is to call upon God. Secondly, The continuance of it, so long as he lived. Invocation in Scripture, is taken, First, Tropically, for the whole worship, and service of God, as 1 *Cor.*1.2. 2 *Tim.*2. Secondly, Properly for that Act of religion, which we call prayer; whether one, or both be here meant, is not curiously to be disputed, though perhaps he means properly.

As long as I live. Heb. *in my dayes*; which Master *Iunius* with more acuity, then solidnesse, limits to the dayes of his affliction; as if *David* here meant no other dayes of his, then the dayes of his affliction; as he would make probable by, *Psal.* 137. 7. and *Lam.* 1. 21. Better our English Paraphrase; so 2 *Kings* 20.19.

Is

Is it not well, that peace and truth shall be in my Dayes? *Hezekiah*, What means he? In dayes of his affliction? Nay all dayes of his life: *Iob* 27. 6. My heart shall not reproach me in my Dayes; What's that? Not all the dayes of my life, see 1 *Sam.* 1. 11.

But so doth *David* now to limit his devotions, this of prayer especially, to God onely; that no other god, falsly so called; nor, I dare say, Saint, nor Angel, should rob God of his honour. And such fruit should Gods favours have in us, to glue our hearts unto God; and to make us continue glued unto God without separation; see *Act.* 11. 23. *Psal.* 16. 2, 4, 5. and 115. 3. to the 12. verse. These reasons we have. First, That favours we have from God none other can afford us, nor Saint, nor Angel, nor Idoll, nor Devill; amongst the gods there is none can do as thou doest; when *Baal's* priests are brought to tryall, how doth *Elijah* ply upon them? Cry* aloud, questionlesse he is asleep, or in pursuit of his enemies; * Doubtlesse, Thou art our Father, our Redeemer, though *Abraham* be ignorant of us all. Secondly, Besides, we know the * jealousie of our God, how ill he brooks the least lowring look towards an Idoll. Thirdly, The impotencie of all other Idolls, whether reall creatures, or but phantasmes, to help and succour us, or to avenge their own quarrell; Will ye plead for* *Baal*? If he be a god, let him plead for himself, &c. Fourthly, Is there any more ready to hear? more mercifull to respect our misery? more humbling himself to incline

* 1 Kings 18. 27.
* Isa. 63. 16.
* Exod. 20. 5.
* Iudg. 6 31.

cline ears to our prayers? they mislead you, that
* Col. 2. 18. would have you to go to God by * Angels. First, Where is your warrant? Secondly, Can they hear? Thirdly, Are they more willing to hear?

Vse. An exhortation, in no times so necessary, as in these so wavering, and beginning to halt betwixt the two opinions, 1 *Kings* 18. yet have we *Davids* reason to limit us to our God, and his religion. First, How many gracious deliverances hath he given us? How oft hath he made our enemies the tail, us the head? Secondly, How many prayers of ours hath he heard? in famine, in pestilence, in warre? Thirdly, What wonderfull peace, and prosperity hath he given us? and yet doubt we, whether we be in the right? I am not of their minde, who ensure truth of religion by outward things; I know the primary rule is Gods word. But, Secondly, when Gods word hath so clearly warranted our religion, and withall we see the might of his marvellous Acts in prospering those states, and kingdomes that professe it; It is a secondary argument to encourage us to continue in the grace of God. I beseech you, brethren, think upon this above all other duties, when I am dead and gone: Above all nations that ever were Christian, never saw any more plentifull tokens of Gods favours, then we; if we shal now turn back to Popery, take heed lest he make not us a spectacle to all the Churches of the world, as he did the Jews.

Now the good Lord unite our hearts to fear his Name, to continue in the grace of God, to limit

and

and appropriate our religious services, and devotions to that God, whom we have so often experimented to be so gracious unto us, that by no imposture of the wicked we may be drawn away, and fall from our stedfastnesse. To him for his mercies in hearing our prayers, be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Verse. III.

The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow.

THis tends as I think, to explication of what is foresaid of *Davids* fervent love, and vowing himself Gods servant. For it may be demanded, What is the favour of God so great that thus maketh thee devoted to his fear?

I'le tell you: I was in misery inextricable, and he helped me. Three things we have here to be noticed. First, *Davids* state, in this Verse. Secondly, His behaviour, *Vers.* 4. Thirdly, The event, *Vers.* 5, 6.

Sense. The sorrows of death; compare *Psal.* 18. 5. *Act.* 2. 24. ὠδῖνας θανάτου, the pains of Death; yea, as it were of a woman in travell: compassed me, as *Psal.* 40. 12. and 118. 10, 11, 12. so that there appeared no possible way of escape. Pains of Hell, *Sheol*, that is, *Mortiferi*, *Lethales*, Deadly, and Mortall: *Sheol*, oftentimes in Scripture signifies the Grave, as *Gen.* 37. 35. and 42. 38. and 44. 29, 31. sometimes, Hell of the damned,

damned, *Psal.*86.13. *Deut.*32. 22. *Ps.* 9. 17. The summe is, Pulls and straights of mischief so great, as seem to threaten me with Death: In a word, so called; First, Either by similitude, like, or proportioned to them. Secondly, Effective, such as threaten me with Death, and the Grave; Deadly, Hellish are the pains and torments I feel.

Found me; See *Gen.*44. 34. Now so calls he the perils he was in from *Saul*, and other persecuters, by Metonymie of the effect; sorrows for perills, because they wrought in him such Deadly, and Hellish sorrow, as in the end of the Verse.

Observ. But so see what straights of trouble, what perplexed sorrows, and inextricable pulls Gods dearest Saints are sometimes plung'd into, see 2 *Kings* 19. 3. Children come to birth, and there is no strength to bring forth; his whole Church see in like straights, *Exod.*14. 10,13. Three children, *Dan.* 3. 21. *Daniel* himself, *Dan.* 6. 16. see *Psal.*88.3.

What Reasons? See *Deut.* 8. 2. There was a nearer cut into *Canaan* then by the wilderness; and such as wherein they should not have fallen upon so many exigents, Red sea, Famine, Thirst, &c. Why that way? *Psal.*10.4,5,6. the ungodly is so proud, he cares not for God, neither is God in all his thoughts; especially when all things are prosperous, then flourisheth this pride: That cursed nature we have all in us, except by grace, and gracious means, it be restrained, or reformed: Marry when extremity of pain, and perill comes, as *David* notes of the Israelites, *Psal.* 78. 34. and

as

as it is noted also of *Manasseh*, 2 *Chron.* 33. 12, 13. then they sought God; shortly then, it was to pull down their pride, and to drive them to their God in true devotion. Secondly, To prove what is in their hearts, as it is said of *Ioseph*. that the word of the Lord * tryed him; the basest Persian will be a * Iew to enjoy their privileges: and I doubt not, but there are some who endure some sight of afflictions, but when it comes to matter of exigent, and extremity, ye then see them to flie off from God, and say, it is * vain to serve him. Thirdly, To glorifie his power, and mercy, and grace in their deliverance, or sustentation, 2 *Cor.* 12. 9. to see a creature so frail, with constancie to endure fire, frying, sawing asunder, *Heb.* 11. 37. lie long as *Lawrence*, and yet insulting over the fury of Tyrants, and daring them to do their worst; who can but say, *Digitus Dei est hic*, The finger of * God is here, and none but his? Fourthly, To teach us, saith * *Paul*, not to trust in our selves, but in the living God; How loth is nature, how hard is it in grace, not to * leave a little to our own wisdome and power? that oft, till all other hold-fasts fail us, we forget to cast our care upon God, or to relie upon him. The Lord to beat us off from these, sometimes permits unto extremities.

* Psal. 105. 19.
* Hest 8. 17.
* Mal. 3. 14, 15.
* See Exo. 14. 13
* 2 Cor. 1. 8, 9.
* Pro 3. 5.

Take heed how ye condemn broken reeds, men of God in sincerity for this; because God writes * bitter things against them, lest ye condemn the generation of the just; yet so did the wicked in *Davids* time, *Psal.* 22. 8. and *Psal.* 71. 11. You must Know: First, That Gods love is not known by

Use.

* Iob 13. 26.

*Eccles.9.1. *Isa.53.3. * outward things. Secondly, And what think you of our Saviour, A man of * sorrows, and extremities, and who saw as many exigents as any? Yet of him proclaims the Father from heaven, *He is my * beloved Sonne, in him I am well pleased.*

*Mat.3.17.

But, Secondly, is it not strange, Gods children should so judge of themselves on this occasion? Certainly it is true, what censure they would tremble to passe on others in like case, they spare not oft to passe on themselves. Of all passages in the story of *Iob*, that one thing wonders me; that with all the pleading of his friends, whereby they labour to prove him hypocrite, yet still he maintains, not that he was without sinne, but void of grosse hypocrisie. Thirdly, Think not when thou comest to Gods service, and hast for Gods cause forsaken the world, as * *Micah*, therefore God must now blesse thee in outward things, especially whilest precisely thou keepest this way. First, Where is thy promise absolute, and unlimited? I dare say, thou canst not alledge one. Secondly, Hast thou a privilege above all Gods servants? or hath God, or will he for thy sake make another way then by the Crosse? *Act.* 14. 22. I know God is pleased to respect our infirmities, yet without some afflictions, and perhaps exigents, canst thou hope to enter Gods kingdome? or think thou walkest with a right foot to the Gospel? see 2 *Tim.*3.12. Thirdly, Hast thou not learnt, that God hath to this end sanctified afflictions, to wean thee from the earth? or art thou ignorant of the sinne, that hangs so fast, and

*Iudg.17.13.

presseth

presseth down so sore? *Heb.*12.1. Knowest thou neither the stubbornnesse of thy Nature, nor thy strong propensions to evill? Certainly it is true, there are of Gods own, many, whom rods amend not, they must be scourges, yea scorpions, as *Rehoboams*.

I found trouble and sorrow. The word signifies such sorrows as are usually joyned with * sighing; it should seem then Gods Saints are sensible of their afflictions, and they pierce them oft with sorrows inexplicable; I speak not onely of those, which come as chastisements, but such also as come as trialls: *Hezekiah* * weeps sore, *David* makes his bed to * swimme, his soul is vexed, groans, cryes; in one place, he * roars for the very disquietnesse of his heart.

* Isa.35.10. and 51.11.
* Isa.38.3.
* Psal.6.4,6.
* Psal.38.8.

Reasons are; First, Though they have put on grace, yet they have not quite put off nature; strong * cryes, and tears, we read even of our Saviour; and of his soul, that it was * sorrowfull unto death; he fears, and mourns, yet without sinne: The fear of death, and sorrow is naturall, yea according to rectitude of Nature. Secondly, Though they know God cannot hate his children, yet they know, he may be, and is oft angry with his Saints: The Lord was angry with *Moses*, with whom he spake as a man with his * friend; and whether our exigents come for tryall, or for chastisement, Gods children cannot alwayes easily discern. Thirdly There are infirmities incident to the best Saints; *Iobs* * fear I confesse a little distrustfull, in regard of Gods promise,

* Heb.5.7.
* Mat.26.38.
* Num.12. See Deut.3.24,25,26.
* Iob 6.11.

1 Cor. 10. 13. yet such blasts, or blooms of distrust, doth sense of naturall infirmity oft cast upon us. Fourthly, Oft times in afflictions extreme, Satan, shall I say, or Conscience, presents to our * remembrance our sinnes, and then if affliction be gall, and * wormwood, even unto Saints, who can wonder? Christianity is not Stoicall, much lesse stockish: if there be grace, sensible it is above the ordinary rate even of a frown of the Almighty; but his word, his threat makes to tremble, the least noise of wrath, makes them to melt, as * Iosiah: There is something like patience, that is not so, we call it stupidity, Ier. 5. 3. thou hast smitten, but they have not sorrowed, Pro. 23. 35. It is said of Iob, in all this he did not sinne with his mouth, neither charged God * foolishly, but who doubts but the losse of so many children pierced him as a father? except perhaps we think grace makes us ἄστοργοι, without naturall affection, which Paul taxeth amongst sinnes that accompanied a * reprobate minde.

* Gen. 4. 21.
* Iob 13. 26.
Vse.
* 2 Kings 22. 19.
* Iob 1. 22.
* Rom. 1. 31.

Two faults, or errours, come here to be reproved. First, Of them that when Gods hand is on them by losse of things dearest, please themselves in this, that they are not moved with their affliction, they feel not the smart of Gods visitation; and herein they pride themselves, as if they exceeded Iob himself in measure of patience; as if a man that had a mortified member should think it his fortitude, that without sense of smart, he endures the cutting, or searing of it; Nay, fear rather, lest it be stupid; of such patience he said

well,

well, who said, it was *Virtus Asinina*. Secondly, There are another sort of people, that when they see in any man mourning, or sorrow, though never so moderate, presently begin to condemn of impatience, or to perswade to patience: in losse of friends or children, monitions in this kinde, to keep a mean in mourning, I blame not; howbeit, I finde never any Prophet, or Apostle, condemning mourning, no nor lamentation, see 1 *Thes.* 4. 13. and see *Ieremiah* * lamenting the fall of *Iosiah*. * 2 Cor. 35. 25.

Verse. IV.

Then called I upon the Name of the Lord: O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul.

IN the former Verse, is declared *Davids* state, and condition, full of deadly, and inextricable perils; here in this Verse, we have his behaviour; his issue ye shall see anon; *Vers.* 5, 6. In his behaviour, we have two things. First, An Act I called. Secondly, The form of Prayer he used. To call upon the Name of the Lord, is to pray unto God, 1 *Cor.* 1. 2. as singing unto the Lord, and singing unto his Name are the same; see *Psal.* 135. 3. Of this Act hath been spoken above already; therefore I shall here treat of it shortly, and onely as it is here inferred immediatly upon the mention of his troubles, and perplexities; and so from thence we have commended to our notice thus much; That no extremity of affliction can drive Gods children from him, they quench not

not devotions, inflame them rather; *Doctrinally we have it, *Hos.* 5.15. and Practically, *Iob* 13.15. though he kill me, yet will I trust in him, saith *Iob*. * Three things onely I finde in this kinde, wherein they have been defective. First, Preposterousnesse in seeking, as in * *Asa*, preferring the Physitian in the first place before God. Secondly, Over-fearfulnesse, * dismaying to approach unto the Throne of Grace, yet approaching also as *Ezra* blushes in Gods presence. Thirdly, Outward feeblenesse in particulars, as in Primative Christians. But of any one, whom it wholly drave from God, I never finde mention; But with the wicked it is not so; The * Queen of Heaven shall be God, if she will give Victuals; the Lord of Hostes shall be forsaken, if he bring to exigent: that's a cursed speech, whether of a cursed man, I know not, at least I say not, * This evill is of the Lord, and why shall we wait on him any longer?

* See Psal. 44. 17. to the 22.

* 2 Chron. 16.12.

* Ezra 9.6.

* Ier. 44.17.

* 2 Kings 6.33.

The forme of Prayer it self next is to be noticed; it is short, but pithy; full of earnest, and most passionate Devotion.

Sense, *Naphsi*, *Erue*, *Rescue*; My soul, that is, my life, or my person, as *vers.* 8. Now though I doubt not but *David* in some of his afflictions used larger forme of words, yet to this summe amounted all; *O Lord, I beseech thee, rescue my soul*; wherein are almost all things required to acceptable prayer. First, The Person, or *objectum cui*. Secondly, Faith of Audience. Thirdly, Earnestnesse of Affection; *Annah*. Fourthly, The matter, *Rescue my soul*, That Regular.

I would not be mistaken in what I deliver Doctrinally from hence; but sure it is true, rightly taken. It is not multitude of words, but muchnesse of affection that formes our prayers to acceptability: Two faults our Saviour found in the Pharisees devotion. First, * βαττολογία, Vaine babling, or needlesse repetitions, as that of *Battus* in the Poët,--*& erant in montibus illis, & erant in montibus illis.* Secondly, πολυλογία, Much talking, many words: * *Solomon* gives Item against it, especially in all speech passing twixt God and us; Let thy words be few, pithy as thou wilt, but few, fit for the matter thou prayest for, and such as befits the Majesty of that God whom thou prayest unto. And if a man consider the use that speech hath in prayer, I meane private prayer, it is not to * informe the Lord of our wants; for he knows what we need, before we aske, and professeth his audience of * sighes, and groans: But first to expresse our affections, by that instrument, which God hath given us for that end, to wit, our Tongue, *Psal.* 35. 28. See *Psal.* 5. 1,2,3. Secondly, Then to kindle our affections, that when we hear from our selves the sound of our misery, or wants, or blessing, by the redounding thereof upon our minds, our affections may be doubled; whereto if few, as well as many words suffice, *quorsum* πολυλογία; to what purpose is the use of many? The point in hand is tender, and must warily be dealt withall; yet give leave to minde you what I observe in perusing the Psalmes; the chief pattern I know extant for Devotion is, *Psal.* 5. 1,2,3. there

* Matth. 6.7.

* Eccles. 5.2.

* Matth. 6.32.

* Rom. 8.26.

Exod. 14.15.

 are

are, First, Words. Secondly, Meditation, to guide them. Thirdly, Crying, to shew the Earnestnesse of Affection; one tearm he there useth is borrowed from Warr; I will direct, order my prayer, as Curiously as men do their battell, where no man must be out of rank, nor hear a word out of his order: Truely * *Austine*, *Aliud est sermo multus, aliud diuturnus affectus*, there is difference between much speech, and much affection; our Saviour spent whole nights in prayer; and we must never think our prayer long, while our affection keeps up in vigour; *Multum loqui, est in orando rem necessariam superfluis agere verbis, multum autem precari, est ad eum quem precamur diuturna & pia cordis excitatione pulsare:* In a word, as a man may not beat upon, and blunt his affection with babling, when he feels it languish, so while he feels it in vigour, he may not over-soon break off his prayer.

* Aug. ep. 121.

Vse. 1. They have a kinde of devotion in the Church of *Rome*, which they number amongst their most meritorious and satisfactory works; It is this, to pray by the Bead, by the Tale, so many *Ave-Maries*, *Pater-nosters*, in a strange tongue which they understand not; and he is counted the devoutest man, who spends most houres in prayer; in the interim, neglecting all other offices of Religion, or speciall calling; for my part, *rumpatur, pereat*, let him burst, and perish, that opposeth Devotion, especially this part of it that is spent in prayer: But first, Is there no place for Meditation, for * Hearing? Secondly, Is this to pray, to blatter

* Eccles 5. 1.

blatter we know not what in a strange tongue? How do they in praying attain the end of ends, which is, saith *Austin*, not to inform God, but First, To minde our selves of what we ask. Secondly, To excite affection. Thirdly, And why so many words, so much babling? As if the Lord we serve were asleep, as *Elias* speaks of *Baal*; or as if fewer words with more affection did not better please him, *Eccles.* 5.2.

Secondly, It shews us the great grace of God, and his propense favour to us, who with so little ado is ready at a call, when he sees the season fit to hear us. I deny not, but he sometimes deferres, but it is, First, To prove our faith. Secondly, To humble us the more under conscience of our own indignity. Thirdly, To set better price of the blessing asked. Fourthly, That he may whet affection. Fiftly, He means to double the blessing, as we do our devotion; but certainly, when he sees us fitted to receive, presently he grants what we pray for. *Vse.* 2.

Thirdly, If I should prescribe a form of private devotion, I should preferre the custome of Ægyptian Churches, mentioned by *Austin*; Let them be frequent, pithy, passionate; but yet consider whom you have to deal withall; few words, but pithy, and affectionate, such as beseem such a Majestie to be called upon withall. *Vse.* 3.

The issue remains, *He helped me.* But before he comes to expresse the issue, he seems a little to interrupt himself, and to breathe out into celebration of the grace, and mercy of God, which

he had experimented in his deliverance.

As touching the sense of the words; by Graciousnesse of God, we conceive, that property of his nature, inclining him above our merits, without our merits, against our merits, to do good unto us; see *Psal.* 111. 4. and 86. 15. *Exod.* 33. 19. Righteousnesse or Justice, that inclines him to give to every one what belongs unto him. If any ask how justice appeared in his deliverance, this is the answer; First, There is *Iustitia dicti*, as well as *facti*, Justice of word, and promise, as well as of fact, and deed, 1 *Ioh.* 1. 9. *Heb.* 6. 10. Secondly, They put upon God a threefold Justice, according to a fourfold person he sustains. First, That whereby he doth what is meet for him that is good; that is, naturally good, to do for his creatures, from this Justice issues his loving kindnesse, see *Psal.* 36. 6, 7. and 40. 10. Secondly, *Paternum*, Fatherly justice, so it is equall, and just he should protect his children, *Psal.* 103. 13. hear their prayers, *Matth.* 7. 11, *&c.* Thirdly, Judiciary if you think here meant, It is just; Justice requires it of God himself, to vindicate the innocent from their oppressours, and to give them testimony of innocencie.

Object. But who is so innocent?

Answ. None indeed simply so, and in respect of God, yet in respect of men, for particular faults; see *Psa.* 7. 3, 4. and 18. 19, 20, 21. Our God, that is, the God whom we serve, taking it contradistinct to idols, as *Psal.* 115. 3. Is mercifull; the word signifies tenderly mercifull, such an

an one as whose bowels yern upon our miseries; so propense is he to releeve them; by old *Zacharie* they are called * Bowels of mercy. * Luke 1.78.

But in this passion of devotion, two things he commends to every devout soul, in any experiment he hath had of any attribute of God. The first is, Observation, noticing and observing those attributes of God, which have manifested themselves in the blessings reached unto us; or in any his operations towards the sonnes of men; see *Psal.* 107. 43. who so is wise will observe these things. *Iehu* no great good man, yet had his observation of the truth of God spoken by his Prophets, 2 *Kings* 10. 10. *Know now that no word of the Lord shall fall to the ground, confer.* 2 *Kings* 9. 36. Saint *Paul*, 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. he is in a long commemoration of Gods grace towards him in his conversion; in the midst of it, he breaks out to this point of observation; Certainly it is a truth, Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. Saint *Peter* to *Cornelius*, *Act.* 10. 34. I perceive of a truth that God is no respecter of persons. *David*, *Psal.* 147. He bindeth up the broken in heart, he tells the number of the starres. Why goes he not on in his numeration? Devotion wills him to notice this observation, *Great is our Lord, and of great power, his understanding is infinite.*

The benefits thence accruing to us, are specially two. First, It is an excellent strengthening of faith, concerning all truths God hath revealed touching his Nature and Will: ye may observe Gods owne servants sometimes overtaken with

doubtings of the Attributes of God; of his Mercy, and Grace, the Prophet, *Psal.* 77.7,8. of his Truth, *Ieremiah*, *Ierem.* 15.18. *Wilt thou be altogether unto me as a Lyar, and as waters that faile?* Of his Power, *Zechariah*, *Luke* 1. and *Sarah*, *Gen.* 18. yea, *Moses*, who had so often seen the power of God, yet at a time doubted, *Num.* 20.12. Here now hath Observation place, as a potent means to strengthen our Faith.

The Nature of God, and Conclusions touching it, we have delivered in the Scriptures, and had we no experiment, are bound to beleeve them: the evidence of all, and arguments demonstrating them, we have in his works of Creation, and Providence; specially in the things that we see wrought before our eyes: To this end tends the History of Scripture, and had we wisedom, we should observe in the daily proceedings of providence towards others, towards our selvs, what would silence the godlesse thoughts of Infidelity. Justice, Trueth, Power, Mercy, Goodnesse, &c. we daily experiment, and yet, fools as we are, observe not; No marvell then, if in time of Temptation our Faith grows so languishing.

A second benefit thence issuing, is hope of obtaining what ever good thing we experiment, according to the promise of God, See 1.*Sam.*17.36, 37. in *David*, and *Paul*, 2. *Cor.*1.10. and 2.*Tim* 4. 17,18. *David* goes farther, to time of forefathers, *Psal.*22.4,5. And the reason is good, such as the Lord hath been to others, to us, so will he be to us, if we resemble in behaviour.

I say

I say as *Moses*, Oh that this people were wise; that we had all this wisedome, to observe the Lords Actions, of Justice, Mercy, Providence, Truth, Goodnesse, to others, to our selves! *Vse.*

There lives not the man on earth, but tastes all these in his own person; yet how few are they that observe them: So of Threatnings, Sundry precious Promises are given unto us, saith * *Peter*; Not one, I dare say, but his Children rightly qualified have seen, or may see exemplified; That he will be a God to the righteous Parents, and to their seed, who can but observe? certainely, it ravisheth me to consider; and though weak in Faith, and much conflicting with doubtings, yet it strengthens my Faith, to see Gods Grace towards others: So of Comminations for Drunkards, Whoremongers, &c. I see it daily exemplified, Why doubt I? But surely if in our own particulars we would be observant, we should much more be fortified; *David* fetcheth it *ab ovo*, from his Birth, from the Wombe of his mother, * *On thee was I cast from my mothers wombe, thou hast been my God from the wombe.* I beseech you be exhorted to this point of Prudence, beleeve me no more, if you see not Athisme, Infidelity, Distrust, Unthankfulnesse, Disobedience, all evills die in you. Two things there are that hinder it. First, Opinion of fortune in all these Accidents of common life, as if there were no providence guiding them; yet to a Sparrow our Saviour extends * it, yea, even to * Lots, the things most chanceable. Secondly, The second hinderance, is the ascribing the

* 2 Pet.1.3.

* Psal.139.13.

* Mat.10.29.

* Pro.16.33.

the good or ill ſucceſſe of our lives to the means; if evil, to our imprudence or wilfulnes; if good, to our own wiſdome & induſtry, whereas alas, What is our All, except the Lord give the * bleſſing?

* Pſal.127.1.

The ſecond thing obſervable in this paſſion of devotion is, the paſſionate, and devout expreſſion, and celebrating with due praiſe the attributes of God, wch he had experimented; ſo filled he is with raviſhment in the contemplation, that interrupts his ſpeech, he cannot expreſſe the benefit, but firſt he celebrates the praiſe of the attribute: like paſſages you may obſerve many in reading the *Pſalmes*, ſpeeches broken, and ſeemingly interrupting the ſentence, and making a kinde of ſoleciſme, when yet if you truly did underſtand the affection of a ſoul truly devout, you will finde them moſt pertinent. *Epheſ.*2.4,5. The Apoſtle intends to remembrance the people of their bleſſed change of eſtate, from being dead in treſpaſſes, and ſinnes, to ſpirituall life; the ſpeech would have paſſed full enough for the ſenſe, in the ſimpleſt commemoration; but mark how devotion interpoſeth, *God which is rich in mercy, of his great love wherewith he loved us, hath quickened*; like ſee, 1 *Tim.* 1. *The grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant in faith and love.* Do you ask me a reaſon of it? and I ask you, Why doth the Sunne ſhine? Why doth fire burn? No man can give reaſon of it: It is the nature of the creature, and this is the nature of devotion. Marry, if you would ask me a reaſon why he ſhould ſo do, I could give many, but it is impertinent to the point in hand:

we

we handle not now matter of duty to urge obedience, but matter of property, that tends rather to triall: And so make use of this point, see how thou art affected, when thou meditatest the many benefits God hath donne to thy soul, feelest thou such motions as these, thy belly, as *Elihu* speaks, is full as bottles of new wine, thou must speak to the praise of God, else thou breakest, as *Ieremie*, I cannot hold, it is well, and I blesse thy soul; my belly, saith *David*, *Ernctabit*, shall belch out thy praise. But oh the deadnesse of our indevout hearts in this behalfe! We can sometimes speak of the blessings we enjoy from God, and perhaps we sometimes expresse our noticing the hand of God reaching these favours to us, but shew me the man of *David* spirit, that breaks out into the magnifying of the grace, or mercy, or power, or goodnesse of God: In a word, two faults I observe in this kinde in us. First, That either we languish in the praise of the God that hath done so great things for us, and with a little bare lip-thanks passe over his benefits. Secondly, Else are not distinct, or particular in noticing the speciall attributes we have experimented: me thinks, I would have a Christian so skiltull in this kinde, that he should know to what property of God he should ascribe every benefit he enjoys, every work, or operation of God to his creatures; in some shine wisdome, in some goodnesse, in some long-suffering, in some patience, in some grace, and mercy, in some justice, &c. But the wisdome of a Christian should be this, to be so distinct in

*Iob 32.19.

knowledge, and observation, as to know, to whether attribute to ascribe whether blessing: As in a body perfectly mixt, there are all elements, yet still one predominant, so in all the works of God towards the sonnes of men, Mercy and Truth, Righteousnesse and Peace, Wisdome and Power, have their concourse, yet so, as some one or other have their predominance: Let our wisdome be such in observing, that we may not let passe that speciall attribute, without speciall celebration; so doth *David* here, and Saint *Paul* also in like sort, 2 *Cor.* 1. 3. stileth the Lord, on like observation, Father of mercies, and God of all comfort; As for example, In pardon of sinne, there is Wisdome, there is Justice, &c. but the predominant is Mercy. Secondly, In crowning of our services, there is eminent Grace and Bounty. Thirdly, In supporting in temptations, there is, Power, &c.

Verse. VI.

The Lord preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me.

IN this Verse we have; First, A conclusion. Secondly, The proofe of it. In the conclusion again three things. First, The blessing, Preservation. Secondly, The Authour of it, the Lord. Thirdly, The persons capable, and their qualification, the Simple.

Preservation, conceive their safeguarding from evill, from mischief, as 2 *Tim.* 4. 18.

Simplicity

Simplicity in Scripture often hears ill, as bad as folly, so *Prov.* 1. 22. *How long ye simple ones will ye love simplicity?* and *Prov.* 7. 7. *Among the simple ones there was a young man void of understanding*; and again, *Prov.* 9. 4. *Who so is simple, let him turn in hither:* and so the word after the Genuine Etymon imports, A silly man; one that with any persuasion is lead, or mislead, to any thing, as *Pro.* 14. 15.

Here he stiles them so, whom else he calls plain men, and harmlesse, * *Phil.* 2. 15. Saint *Paul* calls such men perfect; see also *Rom.* 16. 19. and * 1 *Cor.* 14. 20. They are such as honestly keep the plain way of Gods Commandments, without those slights, or creeks, of carnall policie, for which men are in the world esteemed wise, see *Gen.* 25. 27. *Iacob* called a plain man. Simple or foolish, he calls them ἀφρόνας, because they are generally so esteemed amongst the wise of the world; not that they are so silly as they are esteemed, for if the Lord can judge of wisdome and folly, the onely fool is the Athiest, and profane person, *Psal.* 14. 1. the onely wise man in the world is the plain, down-right Christian, *Deut.* 4. 6. who keeps himself precisely in all states to that plain honest course the Lord hath prescribed him: And to such simple ones, Gods fools, who in their misery, and affliction, keep them onely to the means of deliverance, and comfort, which the Lord hath prescribed them, belongs this blessing of preservation, and safeguarding from mischief, or destruction: so *Salomon*, *Prov.* 16. 17. *The highway of the upright is to depart from evill*; the benefit is,

* ἀκέραιοι.
* πανοῦργοι.

He that keepeth his way, preserveth his soul; see also, *Prov.* 19. 16, 23. exemplification see in *Asa*, 2 *Chron.* 14. 9, 10, 11, 12. and 16. 7, 8, 9. read the excellent speech of *Hanani* the Seer.

Reason if ye ask, none can better be given then this, That it gives unto the Lord glory of wisdome, more then all the turning of devices amongst the wicked; How pleaseth it the Lord to see himself magnified amongst his children, to see them deny themselves, their own wisdome, and policie, and to relie simply on him? And where have you seen any person, or state, leaving the direct broad way which the Lord hath prescribed, ever prosperous? It was (in the eye of reason) a notable policie that *Ieroboam* used to prevent the revolt of Israel to the house of *David*, see 1 *Kings* 12. 26, 27, 28. but it became a sinne to the house of *Ieroboam*, to cut it off, and to destroy it from the face of the earth, 1 *Kings* 13. 34. This may learn us to bewail the wisdome of some states in the world, and to wish they were more simple; I mean, in *Davids* sense, to keep Gods high way, to make his statutes of our counsell; though *Moab* and *Ammon* be confederate together, these devices without God shall be unprosperous; though hand joyn in hand, yet shall not the wicked go unpunished.

But for our own particular; Let us count it our best wisdome to cleave close to our God, to walk in his ways, to this belong promise of Gods protection, *Psal.* 91. 11 Excellently *David*, *Psal.* 5. compassed about with so many adversaries, *ver.* 8.

Lead

Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousnesse, because of mine enemies, make thy way straight before me; this do, hereby thou shalt be safe, *Psal.* 37.

These Caveats remember. First, It being a temporall blessing, is to be understood with limits ordinary to such favours; As first, With exception of the Crosse. Secondly, Reservation of power to the promiser to chasten particular delinquencies. Secondly, Though perhaps we suffer losse, yet life given for a prey, *Ier.* 45. 5. Thirdly, Manner of preservation divers. First, By sustaining, 2 *Cor.* 12. 9. Secondly, By taking us from evill, *Isa.* 57. 1. Thirdly, Or by deliverance out of evill, by giving issue, 1 *Corin.* 10. 13. 2 *Pet.* 2. 9. See *Annotat. aa* 2 *Thes.* 2. 16. *pag.* 210. *Edit.* 1627.

The proofe follows; *I was brought low, and he helped me.* Where we have two things considerable. First, The ground of proofe chosen to make it good, and that is experience. Secondly, The sufficiencie of the proofe. The ground of proofe is experience, or example; which, if any thing, most swayes, as most running into sense: so is God pleased graciously to exemplifie his promises for the confirmation of our faith. And this generally observe, there is not a promise of God in any kinde, but we have seen, or may see it daily exemplified; that if for his bare word we beleeve not, yet for his works sake we may beleeve him: Sure it is true, In dayes of famine we shall be fed, *Psal.* 37. so we are sure was the family of *Iacob*, so was *Elias*, so the widow of *Sarephath*: Surely

it is true, God will deliver his out of temptation, though his wrath come upon the whole world of the ungodly, 2 *Pet.* 2.9. so was *Noah*, so was *Lot* delivered, &c. Sure it is true, In pestilence we shall be preserved, except either we our selves hinder it, or except God means us some greater good in it; Israelites were so, *Exod.* 12. Certainly it is a truth, God will not leave the righteous, nor their seed, except perhaps they degenerate; Kept he not so his mercies to *David*? It is undoubtedly true, God shall bring the innocencie of the righteous to light, and make it as the noon-day, *Psal.* 37. Was it not so in *Ioseph*? In a word, Ye cannot name the promise of this life, or of that to come, which God hath made to his Church, but he hath plentifully exemplified, according to the purport, and tenour, and intention of the promiser: God shall certainly binde up the broken in heart, he shall give medicine to heal their sorrows; *David* experimented it, *Psal.* 32. *Though the righteous fall, yet shall he not be cast off*, *Psal.* 37.24, *&c.*

Oh, we of little faith, why doubt we? have we a promise from God? and are we sure, we rightly understand it? and that we have our due qualification? Then we be assured, that heaven and earth shal passe, ere a title of that promise shal fall to the ground: God hath pleased by promise to make himself our debter, and the better to confirm our faith, hath exemplified his promise; and yet doubt we? Yes; For though to some we see them exemplified, yet as many we see destituted,

and

and our selves experiment them not? With the limits intended, I dare swear, they have been exemplified, if they have failed, we fail in the condition. Secondly, We erre, *Toto cœlo*, if we think all Gods promises are intended after the Letter, some are made good in the equivalent. Thirdly, We deceive our selves, if we think our habituall being the children of God, gives us title to the fruition of all his promises; there is *Actus* and *Exercitium* also required. Fourthly, How farre are we wide, if we think God hath not reserved power to try our faith, and patience, by removing sense of love, by writing bitter things against us? &c. But rightly understood, thou hast seen, doest see them all exemplified: And seeing God hath for this end exemplified, that he may confirm our faith, and expectation; The wisdome that from hence I do commend unto you; is, First, To acquaint your selves with Histories Divine, written for this end, saith * *Paul*, that we might have hope; in reading them, this wisdome let me commend unto you. First, To distinguish personall from generall promises; there are personall promises made to some of Gods children, as that of *David*, *He should not want a man of his seed to sit upon his Throne*; but is it a generall promise, then see and observe, perhaps you shall finde they not partaking in it, have failed in particulars; or else, seest thou any to whom it is not made good, see then, if thou canst not observe God to have in some (other) way, or kinde made good his promise, 2 *Sam.* 10. *God will do me some good for this evill.*

* Rom. 15. 4.

Secondly,

Secondly, There are some promises peculiar to some speciall times, some universally belonging to all times; See an example of the first of these, *Mar.* 16. 17, 18. *These signes shall follow them which beleeve*; peculiar to the Primitive times of the Church, while the state of religion was now in altering, and the Gospel planting amongst the Gentiles: He that now shall attempt it, the end being ceased, shall be *prodigium*; That of *Ioel* 2. 28. *Sonnes and daughters shall prophesie, young men see visions, old men dream dreams &c.* was the privilege alone of the first age of Christianity, *Act.* 2. 17. But is it a generall promise to all persons, times, states of the Church, not one but hath had, hath, and shall have plentifull exemplification? Thirdly, There is considerable the manner of performance, and the thing it self promised; the manner may be severall, when the thing is generall, not all by miracle fed as *Elias*, nor as *Elisha* by Angels delivered; but this give me leave to say, Infidelity towards any of Gods gracious promises, is fouler in us, then it could be in the ancient Patriarchs; What had they but bare word to rest upon? Behold us compassed with a cloud of witnesses, from *Abraham* to *David*, from *David* to Christ, from Christ to this day; and if we now waver in faith, after such plentifull exemplifications, our infidelity shall be most haynous. The sufficiencie of proofe comes next to be handled, It is here from a particular example, or experiment; Is that true what Logick teacheth us, From one particular instance to conclude truth of a generall

generall Rule? Yet in Divinity it is frequent, from particular examples to prove generall conclusions: Let us see some, *Rom.*11.1,2. God hath not rejected any of the Jews whom he foreknew; How is this proved? For I also am an Israelite: Again, *Rom.* 3.28. All that are justified, are justified by faith, How proved? *Rom.*4.1. *Abraham* was so justified; 1 *Tim.*1.15,16. Christ came into the world to save all penitent, and beleeving sinners; How proved? I a persecutour, a blasphemer, was received to mercy. And this firmly holds according to the Rule of Reason, when the *Ratio formalis*, The Reason of the blessing is generall; For example, Is this the Reason why *David* was preserved, because simple? Then from that instance follows the inference, All simple shall be preserved. Was the reason of *Abrahams* justification, his faith? Then wheresoever is true faith, there also is justification, &c. Secondly, We must know that Gods dealings are exemplary, 1 *Tim.*1.16. *Rom.*4.23,24. Thirdly, God is no respecter of persons, *Rom.* 2.14. He is rich in mercy to all that call upon him, *Rom.*10.12,13.

Make much even of particular examples, they may stead much in day of triall; and it oft falls out so, that many promises help not to our comfort so much as one example; usually we think our case a None-such, without peer or parallell. *Vse.*

Verse. VII, VIII.

Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee: for thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.

ANother Passion, or passage of *Davids* devotion, upon meditation of Gods mercy in his deliverance from pressure; And the words are, in summe, a sweet soliloquie of *David* with his soul, checking it after a sort for the disquiet, and unrest it passionately had plunged it self into, by occasion of his many, and grievous outward pressures; Deduction it hath by way of use, and inference, from his experience of Gods mercy in his preservation: The form of carriage is in a Rhetoricall Apostrophe (for what is more eloquent then Devotion)

Considerable therein; are, First, The effect of *Davids* outward pressures, They wrought the disquiet and perturbation of his soul. Secondly, The check he gives to his soul, for admitting such perturbation. Thirdly, The chearing he affords it. Fourthly, The ground of that chear, *The Lord hath dealt bountifully*; which in the eighth Verse he evidenceth by particulars of favours vouchsafed him.

* Matth. 11. 29. The rest of the soul, * ἀνάπαυσις, is the calm temper of the faculties thereof, and the sweet repose it findes in the fruition of what yeelds it content-

ment;

ment, Heathens called it [illegible], or *Tranquillitatem animi*, which they anxiously sought, but never enjoyed: This Christian rest of the soul is that sweet temper, and tranquillity, grace frames in the faculties of it, and the sweet repose it findes in Gods mercy through Christ: That *David* had formerly enjoyed, but now found interrupted, through the manifold afflictions outward, and inward, he was pressed withall, and therefore checkingly adviseth his soul to return thereto, and to enjoy the former tranquillity. So ye see how farre afflictions work upon gracious dispositions, even to the disturbance of the tranquillity of the soul; It is little *Paul* saith, *Heb.* 12. 11. no affliction joyous, therefore addes, it is grievous: *Psal.*42.5,11. and 43. 5. we read of dejecting the soul, of tumults in his soul, *Psal.*6.3. of vexation, and *Psal*, 38. 8. he roared for the very disquietnesse of his heart: And you may observe the same to issue out of foure causes usually. First, Violent Passions, whether grief, or fear, or wrath, &c. when they grow immoderate, towards violent, what a cumbustion fill they the whole man withall? *Iam.*4.1. See envious grief, and desire of revenge in *Haman*, what disquiet it worketh, *Hest.*5. 13. and 6. 12. So *Ahabs* covetousnesse, 1 *Kings* 21.4. Secondly, Conflict. First, Twixt sanctified reason, and appetite, when reason perswades one way, affection draws another, and each strives for victory. Secondly, Twixt rectified conscience, and affection, when affection would carry to evill, and conscience would re-

ſtrain from evill. Thirdly, Twixt corruption, and grace, *Rom.* 7. 23. the law of the members rebelling againſt the law of the minde. Thirdly, Guiltineſſe, as *Pſal.* 32. and 38. and 51. This is piercing above meaſure, *Pſal.* 38. 3,4. I mean, when either new ſinnes are unrepented of, and for which we have not yet received aſſurance of pardon into the conſcience, &c. or when the Lord preſents to the ſoul old ſinnes, without manifeſtation of favour in the pardon of them, as *Iob* 13. 26. Who can expreſſe the terrour of that unreſt the ſoul is then poſſeſſed withall? Fourthly, Apprehenſion, whether true, or fained, it matters not to the diſquiet of the ſoul; It was a falſe apprehenſion of *Iob* 13. 24. that God counted him as an enemy; he meant his good, as his triall, his humiliation, his juſtifying againſt all the ſlanderous imputations of Satan; Yet how perplexed is that holy ſoul? Falſe, that of *David*, that God had * forgotten to be gracious, or had ſhut up his loving kindneſſe in diſpleaſure; yet is he troubled, overwhelmed, breaks ſleep, yea is aſtoniſhed, *Pſal.* 77. 3, 4. But is the apprehenſion true, then no marvell, if the ſoul can finde no reſt; It was true that God had taken from him the joy of his ſalvation, *Pſal.* 51. inhibited lively operation of his ſanctifyng ſpirit, *Pſal.* 32, *&c.* Here, if he roar for the diſquietneſſe of his heart, who marvells? Who, I mean, that ever taſted how gracious the Lord is?

* Pſal. 77. 8, 9.

Vſe. 1. Take heed how ye cenſure, leſt ye miſ-cenſure thoſe, to whom theſe things betide; What if through

through passion, or conflict, or consciousnesse of evill, or apprehension of wrath, they finde for present happily no rest in their souls? What, when through sinfull infirmity they bewray impatience, murmuring? &c. Therefore are they none of Gods? *Et quidni* Davidem, Jobum, Jeremiam, *& quicquid sol unquam vidit renatissimum ex renatorum albo expungimus?* Then condemn we the whole generation of the just. Pity, compassionate, comfort such perplexities; for either thou mayest in like sort be * tempted; thou art yet in the * body, *Hodie mihi, cras tibi*: and God is often moved to * turn his hand from them to thee, that he may teach thee more compassion; and *Iobs* friends for this fault are sharply rebuked, *Iob* 38. 2. and sacrifices expiatory for that sinne prescribed, *Iob* 42.7,8.

* Gal.6.1.
* Heb.13.3.
* Pro.24.18.

Flatter not thy self by mis-understanding the promise, as if without interruptions the performance were intended: *Mercy and peace shall be upon them that walk after the rule*, *Gal.* 6. 16. But think you, without interruption? Where is that promise? Hath not God reserved to himself power to chasten, to try, to prevent, &c. Though favour be not lost, yet sense is often interrupted; and though God never hate, *Ioh.* 13.1. yet is oft angry with his dearest servants, &c. *Vse.* 2.

Beware how we provoke the Lord to remove from us this blessednesse of our soul, or through our own indiscretion interrupt, or disturb the rest of our souls; the happinesse of a Christian upon earth stands in it. *Vse.* 3.

Occasions of the soul's disquietnesse.

I will minde you of the occasions how Gods own servants have fallen into it.

I. First, Giving liberty to their reason to exact Gods justice, and to quarrell the unequall distribution of the good things of this life, see *Psal.*37. and 73.*Ier.*12.*Hab.*1.13,*&c.* Thus curb it. First, He is an absolute Lord, *Matth.* 20. Secondly, Yeeld, that there must be difference betwixt him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not: Must this difference needs be in outward things? *Eccles.*9.1. Sufficeth it not, that we have our preferment in spirituall blessings? *Ephes.* 1.3. And is he bound presently to manifest it? see *Mal.*3.18.

II. Secondly, Our over-prizing some speciall blessings, and too much contentment found in them; I finde many have faulted in that kinde, *Abraham* in *Ishmael*, *Iacob* in *Ioseph*, *David* in *Absalon*; None but God hath chastened; read the stories.

III. Thirdly, But above all, beware of presumptuous sins; sins against conscience, committed out of perswasion of the graciousnesse, and mercy of God: Doth thy experience of Gods favour, the pledges of his love, encourage thee to evill? Trust me no more, if thou loose not, till thy repentance renewed, that former fervour thou hast tasted in his grace, and so pierce thy selfe thorow with perplexed sorrows; see *David*, *Psal.*51. And so is the Effect of *Davids* Pressures.

Follows now the check *David* gives his soul for such causlesse disquiet; *Return unto thy rest, O my soul:* Enjoy thy old tranquillity, solace thy

self

selfin God: so doth grace check its own passions, the storm of violence once overblown, especially for what disturbance riseth from outward pressures, see *Psal.*42.5,11. and *Psal.*43.5. and *Psa.*77. 10. It is mine infirmity; and *Psal.* 73. 22. he befools, be-sots, be-beasts himself for it; What a fool? What an *ignaro*? What a beast am I to be thus vexed, and disquieted for what Gods provident hand disposeth?

And weigh it well, ye shall see reasons enough of controuling our selves in this behalfe, that we suffer either passion, or mis-apprehension to rob us of so great a benefit as is the quiet of the soul. First, Where have we learnt to equall, to overvalue any outward blessing to the peace of the soul, which passeth all understanding? *Phil.* 4. 7. Secondly, Where, to advantage the devill against us, to work upon our passions, till perhaps we be swallowed up of sorrow, 2 *Cor.*7 11. We are not ignorant, saith *Paul*, of Satans wiles. Thirdly, Is it just with God to afflict us? Have we sinned against him? Why then do we not willingly bear his wrath? *Mic.*7.9. Fourthly, Have we forgotten the consolation, that God offers himself unto us as unto children? *Heb.*12.5. His promise, that he will do us good for this evill? 2 *Sam.*16. and in the issue make us partakers of the quiet fruit of righteousnesse? *Heb.*12.11.

Bear we not our selves in these unavoidable passions, which disturb the sweet peace of our souls, they may have their motions, their stirrings in us; but when they grow tumultuous, *Vse*

check,

check, curb, controule, correct them.

How to judge of passions inordinate.

Thus learn to know when they are faulty. First, Do they exceed their measure? Grow they unreasonable? So that if thou shouldest ask thy soul, as *Rahel*, Why am I thus? as *David*, Why art thou so disquieted within me? And canst thou give no reason, when permitted to such measure? Then think, thy otherwise lawfull, are turned to be sinfull passions. Secondly, Do they disturb reason, and understanding, stupifie and benumbe it, that it cannot stirre it self to meditate, or do they command in the soul? Then know they are immoderate. Thirdly, Do they hinder performance of holy, and necessary duties, invocation, meditation, &c. or but cast dulnesse upon the soul in the performance of these duties? Then know, they are grown immoderate. I say not, but to such measure they may arise in the wisest, and most sanctified; yet when they do rise to this height, they have in them what deserves our check. Now the remedy or means to work it in us, is to consider Gods bountifull dealing with us; see *Psal.* 42. 5, 11. and 43. 5. and but the expressions of Gods favour in that kinde, nothing can settle the disquiet of the soul.

Vse.

Let us be exhorted in prudence to direct our meditations from our pressures to the bounty of God, which in other particulars, many, and many we enjoy: there was never childe of God, so followed with Gods storms, but he had left him some pledges of favor to support him, had he had wisdome to meditate on them under Gods hand:

The

The cunning of the tempter is this, To keepe the minde wholly musing on our evills, diverting us from the mercy God remembers in the midst of judgement, *Hab.*3.2.

See I beseech you, see the enumeration of favours that *David* hath, *Psal.* 103. 3. who forgiveth all thy sinnes, healeth all thy diseases, redeemeth thy life from destruction, crowneth with loving kindnesse, and tender mercies, who satisfieth thy mouth with good things, which executeth judgement for the oppressed, which makes known his wayes to his children; and which toucheth the point in hand, *Vers.* 9, 10. He neither keeps his anger for ever, nor deals with us according to our sinnes, punishing ever *Citra condignum*, rewarding *Vltra condignum*.

Oh that this people were wise, to consider how favourable, how bountifull God is in the sharpest of his corrections; How would it silence passion? How well should we hereby provide for the rest of our souls?

Verse. VIII.

For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.

IN this Verse, *David* gives us the evidence of Gods bounty to him, in the enumeration of particular favours conferred on him, wherein are, First, The severall favours. Secondly, The result, or issue of them, *Vers.*9.

The favour in generall is deliverance; From what if you will know. First, From misery painfull, from death, yea from tears; for the sentence riseth ὑπερβατῶς. Secondly, From misery sinfull; *My feet from falling.*

For the sense; Thou hast delivered, that is, rescued, as *Psal. 6. 4.* even when he was at the pits brink he rescued; My soul; That Tropically put sometimes for the Person, as *Exod. 1.5. Act. 27.37.* sometimes for life, as *Hest.7.3. Gen. 9. 5. Iob 2. 4, 6.* whether sense you take, you erre not, they are co-incident, Me or my life: Else thus; The soul hath a twofold consideration. First, As a naturall form of a body so organized, so it lives in the body. Secondly, As a spirituall substance, or subsistence, having in it a power to subsist, and exist in it self without the body; Death for the time, deprives it of the life that it hath in the body, not of that life, or being it hath in it self: But this not all the benefit; Not onely so set me out of deadly perill, but which yet more amplifies his bounty; Mine eyes from tears; The meaning is, From all sorrow, or evidence of sorrow, or cause of sorrow, in respect of outward perill, as *Apoc. 21.4.* When God is said to wipe all tears from the eyes of his Saints; The meaning is, He takes from them all sorrow, and crying, and pain, as the Spirit explicates himself. And my feet from falling; That is, Me from falling, *Synechdoche Metadeptica.*

But so see we the nature of a heart truly thankful to God, there is not a blessing, nor degree of a blessing,

sing, nor circumstance of a blessing, but it takes notice of, and publisheth, My soul from death, my feet from falling; Rescued me when falling, that the circumstance; Mine eyes from tears, the degree. *Psal.* 103.2. Forget not all, that is, not any one of his benefits; so also, *Ephe.* 1. From Verse the third to the fourteenth; *Paul* for his own particular, 1 *Tim.* 1.12,13,14. generally for us all, *Rom.* 5. from *vers.* 6. to the 11. see also *Psal.* 107. 8. To praise is not simply to say him a thank, but to commend, and amplifie the riches of his grace, and mercy, towards us.

Lord that we had *Davids* spirit, that our mouthes might thus be filled with the praise of the Lord; How should the Lord rejoyce over us, and delight to do us good? Wonderfull hath the Lord been in his mercy towards us, in the many deliverances of our Nation from forraigne violence, in our peace, plenty, liberty of the Gospel, and plenty of his word purely preached; whether we consider the blessings in themselves, or measures of the blessings, or circumstances of time, persons, behaviour, &c. And yet, I know not how, whether through continuance, and long enjoying, or whether through opinion that they come to us by ordinary course, the greatest blessings have lost much of their price, that it is to be feared, the Lord means by lack of them to let us see their worth, and learn better to esteem them. *Vse.*

The better to enlarge our hearts to the duty, and to teach you how in meditating Gods fa-

vours to be holily Rhetoricall: Let me mind^e you, First, of the misery that is in the want, suppose it be in remission of sinnes, in knowledge of God, in peace of conscience, in ministery of the word, &c. Secondly, Our unworthinesse to obtain such blessings, *Gen.*32.10. I am lesse, saith *Iacob*, then all thy goodnesse, and the good Centurion, *Mat.*8.8. *Lord I am not worthy*; which and much more we shall easily force our selves to confesse, if we consider our behaviour before God unconverted, full of obstinacie, and of disobedience, *Tit.*3.3. 1 *Tim.*1.13. and with all our unthankfulnesse, and neglect, and abuse of his favours, since our calling, enjoyed, see *Ezra* 9.8, 13. Thirdly, Our impotencie, without grace of God, to acquire, or retain them, *Rom.*5.8. Fourthly, The preferment God hath given us, either in the blessings, or in the measure of the blessings, or in the circumstances, see *Psal.*147.19,20. Fiftly, Comparing our selves with others, perhaps more righteous then our selves, more carefull to seek God, in likelihood, such as would have made better use of his mercies, as *Matth.* 11. 21. These are grounds of this holy Rhetorique, which if by your selves you will work upon by meditation; Trust me no more, if ye finde them not such as will sweeten Gods favours towards you.

Reasons pressing the performance, meditate these. First, Nothing sooner stops the fountain, and current of Gods bounty, then doth unthankfulnes; this hazards to an utter deprivall, as *Rom.* 1.21. Secondly, Or else, the blessing shall be scanted

scanted in the measure, as to the Jews, *Amos* 8.11. Thirdly, or else the blessing continued, shall turn to a curse, and snare unto thee, as riches reserved for hurt, *Eccles.* 5.13. The word to harden, *Isa.* 6. 10. knowledge to aggravate sinne, and punishment, *Iob.* 9.41. Secondly, according to the measure of bounty, and favour contemned, or slighted, so usually is the measure of wrath in the day of visitation, *Matth.* 11.23. Jews highliest advanced in Gods favours. Never did Nation under the sunne drink deeper of his wrath, see *Deuter.* 28. *Levit.* 26.

And my feet from falling: Whether means he into penall misery, and mischief, or into sinne? There is *Lapsus moralis*, as 1 *Cor.* 10. 12. Erre I? or would *David* here be understood of sinning? so *Psal.* 73. 2. *My feet were almost gone, my steps had wel nigh slipt.* And if I be not deceived, the cariage of the Text swayeth to such understanding, rising still from the lesse to the greater. First, It is more bounty to be kept from grief then from death, for there is a greater enlargement from misery; but it is not more bounty to be kept from the sense of affliction, then to be kept from death, which is the greatest of temporall evills; but it is more bounty in a gracious eye to be kept from sinne, then from death. Secondly, How *his eyes from tears?* If not kept from sinne? That had sure cost him many a tear, as *Peter*, *Matth.* 26.75. But understand it *De lapsu morali*, so still riseth the gradation to enlarge Gods bounty; yea, which I count the greatest blessing, in these afflictions he

kept me steady in my course of piety, and suffered not afflictions to sway my heart from him: still in a gracious eye, the benefit seems greater to be delivered from sinning, then from greatest outward affliction; that is the reason Saint *Paul Rom.* 8. 37. triumphs over all afflictions, 2 *Cor.* 11. and 12. He counts them his glory, his crown; but speaking of the prevailing of corruption in particulars, he bemoans himself as the miserablest man alive, *Rom.* 7 24.

The reason of this is, for that rectitude of judgement is so farre vouchsafed, that such men sanctified, can discern twixt good and evill, twixt evill and evill; and in their eye *Malum culpæ*, is greater then *Malum pœnæ*, The evill of sinne, then the evill of pain; For, First, That makes evill, not this; *Puniri non est malum, comparative scilicet, sed fieri pœna dignum.* Secondly, In afflictions they know they may retain favour of God, not so in sinning. Thirdly, That opposite to increated, this to created goodnesse; And besides this, ha-having tasted the smart of sinne in the soul (as who hath not that is Gods?) What affliction is comparable to that of an accusing conscience?

Vse When may we hope to fasten this opinion in our multitude, to think sinne greater then povertie, then death, then bonds? &c. The source of all sinnes is this in the people, that in their sensuallity, and Epicurisme, they will redeem the least affliction with the greatest sinne; Rather then want, steal, kill, what not? rather then loose life, countrey, liberty, commit idolatry, deny Christ; rather

rather then be counted odde, or singular, runne into any sinne of good-fellowship, swear, swagger, drink, and be drunken, &c. rather then feel a little sicknesse, runne, to sorcerer; rather then a little losse in their goods, to a Cunning-man, a Witch, that is, saith *Isa.* 8. from the living to the dead, from God to the devill: Oh that Christians had learned but what some heathens thought! that to be vertuous is more happinesse, then to have the wealth of *Xerxes*, the pleasure of the Epicure, the Dominions of *Alexander*, the honour of the great *Cyrus*, or *Darius*; That it is more miserable to be vitiously inclined, then to endure the poverty of *Irus*. Learn, I beseech you, learn herein to reform, and rectifie your judgements; see *Ioseph*, *Gen.* 39. 9. *How shall I commit this great wickednesse, and sinne against God?* To this end meditate. First, The unavailablenesse of all outward benefits, to stead us in the day of Gods wrath; What then can be like to this? *Isa.* 38. 3. *I have walked before thee in the truth, and uprightnesse of my heart.* Secondly, What hazard thou makest of soul for fulfilling the lust of the body, thou wilt be enclined to make *Moses* his choice, *Heb.* 11. 25. *To suffer afflictions, then to enjoy pleasures of sinne.* Thirdly, How do we forget, *That for all these things the Lord shall bring us to judgement?* *Eccles.* 11. 9. Fourthly, *Fear him that can cast body and soul into hell*, *Luke* 12. 5, *&c.*

Secondly, Try we our selves by this; I do not say all grace stands in this; for I know a naturall mans judgement may be so farre cleared, as to confesse,

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it is greater evill to sinne, then to be afflicted; and yet it is something, as *Paul* speaks, * *To discern the things that differ*; And surely, He is not farre from the kingdome of God, who hath his judgement thus farre rectified: But, First, In whom judgement so farre works, that when the least sinne is offered, or a great affliction, chuseth rather to be afflicted, then to sinne against God, he hath in him something supernaturall. Secondly, He that can more heartily thank God for this, that he hath delivered from the power of sinne, then from bodily calamities; he hath in him something supernaturall.

* Phil.1.10.

Thirdly, He, whom this meditation calms in his pressure; Well, though God suffer me thus to be afflicted, yet he hath delivered from the power of darknesse, he hath kept me from sinning against him, and in that meditation findes contentment; that man hath in him something supernaturall. And tell me, thou that art so much discontented at the course of Gods providence, in dispensing outward blessings; To whether of the two, thinkest thou, is he most bountifull? To thee, whom he hath made rich in faith, though poor in this world, or to those Epicures, and worldlings, whose bellies he fils with his hid treasure, yet suffers to live in dominion of the * Devill, *Lazarus* or the Glutton? Say not therefore, Gods wayes are not equall; even now thou mayest discern betwixt the righteous, & the unrighteous, if thou knowest how to value blessing with blessing, and to give the spirituall preheminence above the temporall.

* 2 Tim.2.26.

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My feet from falling: Yet warily understand, Not as if *David* had not at all sinned under his afflictions; for see *vers.*11. his extravagancie in his passionate censures; and story testifies what more then *Simulationem cautela*, his affliction drave him unto, before *Achish* King of *Gath:* But there is slipping, *Psa.*73.2.94.18. suppose in those passionate murmurings, and discontentments Godschildren feel rising under the Crosse. Secondly, There is falling perhaps into grosser sinne, as impatience, blasphemy, abnegation, as *Peter*, *Matth.*26.75. *Iob* 3. *Ier.* 10. 14. And thirdly, There is *Prolapsio*, or *Ruina*, *Psal.*44. 17, 18. In one of these at least the Lord is gracious to support his children, see *Iob* 1. and 2. *Psal.* 44. 17, 18. *Hebr.* 11. 35. Fourthly, Stumbling at, *Rom.*14, *&c.*

Comfort your selves with these things; either all divine presages are false, else certainly evill times will come; some God is so mercifull unto, to take away from the evill to come, as * *Iosiah* was taken, and * *Enoch*, *Ne malitia mutaret intellectum*, and many other righteous, *Isa.* 57. 1. Yet questionlesse there are some, whom God reserves to trialls, perhaps sharp, and bitter; surely the tendernesse we shew towards verball persecutions, may give us cause to fear, in respect of our selves, we shall be more delicate, and timorous in the fiery triall: yet here is our comfort, God hath been mighty in mans weaknesse, enabled many a weak Christian to endure great fights of affliction, and to resist in striving against sinne, to the shedding of blood; that cloud of witnesses,

Vse.

* 2 Kings 22.20

* Gen.5.24.

Heb. 12. are so many evidences of Gods goodnesse, and power to support us, see *Rom.* 15. 4. This rest assured of, either he will not suffer us to be tempted, or else will give issue with the temptation, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. Nothing shall separate finally from Gods favour, *Rom.* 8. 38.

Verse. IX.

I will walke before the Lord, in the land of the living.

THe Result of *Davids* Deliverance; else, as some conceive, a Promise, or Vow of thankfulnesse to God for his great bounty towards him.

Sense. The reading may be diversly conceived; *I shall walk*, so it denotes the summe of the blessing, or, *I will walk*, so it points at the duty. *Walk before the Lord*, Walking with God we read of *Henoch*, *Gen.* 5. 22, 24 which the Apostle, following the Septuagint, renders, Pleasing God, *Heb.* 11. 5. and in *Gen.* 17. 1. we reade of walking before God, prescribed to *Abraham*, and the explication after a sort sub-joyned, and be thou perfect or upright; the practice of the precept in that sense, see *Gen.* 24. 40. by *Abraham*; see also *Isa.* 38. 3. 1 *Sam.* 2. 35. *I will build him a sure house, and he shall walk before mine anointed for ever:* that is, minister, or do service, to mine Anointed, the *Messiah*, in the Priests Office; *Confer. Luke* 1. 74, 75.

In the land of the living: Fondly do some Ancients

cients here conceive heaven, or the heavenly countrey to be understood; and thereupon take occasion Allegorically to shew that this earth is *Terra morientium*. Consult with Scripture, ye shall finde it imports no more but this upper face of the earth, where living men dwell, and converse; as *Iob* 28. 13. where shall wisdome be found? man knoweth not the price of it, neither is it found in the land of the living; that is, amongst men here on earth, *Psal.* 52. 5. *David* fortelling the destruction of *Doeg*, *God shall take thee out of thy dwelling place, and cast thee out of the land of the living*; Clearly, *Isa.* 38. 11. *I said, I shall not see the Lord in the land of the living, I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world:* The whole sense amounts to this summe; I shall live to do God service amongst men here on earth; and that service will I perform in the uprightnesse, and sincerity of my heart; *contra*, see *Iob* 10. 21, 22. *Psal.* 88. 12.

Which, me thinks, he utters with the voice of joy, and thankfull rejoycing, that the Lord had so graciously delivered him from those deadly perils; for this end, that he should yet live amongst men to do service unto God.

Notice it then as no small blessing of God to have life prorogued to do good service upon earth, whether in the Ministery, or Magistracie, or family, as a craftsman, or husbandman; *For in all these*, saith the Apostle, *Col.* 3. 24. *ye serve the Lord Christ.*

Three things we may observe in the practice of

Saints, serving to evidence this truth. First, Bitter wailings, and lamentations, when God hath threatened to take them away by untimely death; see *David* making his bed to swimme with tears, and with hearts grief pined away with sorrow in his sicknesse; Why? if ye ask, *Psal.6.5.* he saw he was likely to be cut off from doing service unto God. *Hezekiah, Isa.34.14. Like a Crane, or a Swallow, so did I chatter, I did mourn as a Dove, Ver.3. wept sore, I said in the cutting off of my dayes, I shall go to the gates of the grave, I shall be deprived of the rejdue of my years*, compare *Vers.*18,19.

Secondly, A second thing observable in their practice, is their earnest deprecation of untimely death, and fervented supplication to have life prorogued; *Psalmes* are full; see *Psal.*102.23,24. his wailing, he weakened my strength in the way, he shortened my dayes; *Then said I, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my dayes*, let that wrath be upon my adversaries; nay even when yeers were come upon them, yet some remains of ability to serve God, *Psal.* 71.18. *Now that I am old, and gray-headed, forsake me not; untill I have shewed thy strength to this generation, and thy power to them which are yet to come*; see *Psal.*30.8,9,10.

Thirdly, Observe again, the joyfull thanksgiving that they have returned unto God, when he hath pleased to renew hopes of surviving, *Isa.*38. 17. *Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption.*

Papists would assigne this reason; For that the blessednesse that stands in the vision of God, they were

were excluded from, shut up in the strait of Hell, wherein though they rested from outward miseries, yet wanted their souls the chief part of beatitude, the blessed vision, and fruition of the Godhead. Was that the matter? Yet were they *In refrigerio*, in a place where they received comfort, *Luke* 16. 25. And of *Elias* it is noted, he was taken up into heaven, that he with *Moses* appeared unto our Saviour at his Transfiguration, *Matth.* 17. 4. who doubts, but clad with heavenly glory?

Our people fancie another reason: and that forsooth is, because they had not in the old Testament that clear revelation of the glorious state of Gods Kingdome, nor that plentifull assurance of their salvation, that we now have: And was that the reason they desired so long to live? First, herein we affirm untruths, for had not *Abraham*, & *Moses*, and *David*, as firm assurance of the blessed state of Gods children after this life, as the ordinary rate of Gods people now? see *Heb.* 11. 10, 26, 27. And secondly, slander the generation of the righteous; not because they had lesse assurance of Gods love then we, but because they had lesse self-love then we, yea, more zeal for God, and desire to do good to his Church; willingly suffering the respit of their own glorious reward, to the end they might, though on hardest tearms, bring glory to God, and do him service in the land of the living; Therefore this reason themselves give alwayes. First, For that they saw the one half then of them, which also was made

to be an instrument of Gods service to lie brute, and sensless in the grave. Secondly, For that they desired to benefit the generation then living, and to propagate Gods praise to succeeding posterities, *Psal.*71.18.*Isa.*38.19,20. See also *Psal.*30. and 88. and 6. and 115.

Beloved, Remarkable is Gods providence to me, in casting me without any thought, or choice of man, upon a Text presenting to my memorie, even according to the time, this great mercy of God to my soul, delivering my soul from the pit of corruption, that I might yet live to do him service in the land of the living. Worthy were my tongue to cleave to the roof of my mouth, my right hand for ever to forget her cunning, if I should now forget, or passe over with silence, the great love God hath shewen to my soul, in delivering it from the pit of corruption: O Lord enlarge my heart to praise thee.

At Bristoll. Even upon this day, according to the time of life, this time twelve moneths, was I in the jaws of death; none that beheld me, saw so much as the least hope of life, my soul had not the least commerce with the body, so farre as I know: Much about this hour, God was pleased graciously to look upon me, to shew me some glimpse of his mercy, some beginnings of life, some hope that I should walk before him in the land of the living: and hitherto by Gods mercy I live, performing him weak, but hearty service in his Church. Lord, what is man, that thou so visitest him? Who am I, the least of all Saints, the chief of

of all sinners, on whom thou thus magnifiest thy mercie? What is that service poor I have done? What that service thou reservest me to do? O Lord, be pleased to reveal it unto me, to make me worthy, by thy grace, chearfully to perform it: *Da quod jubes, jube quod vis*; for thou hast redeemed my soul from hell, my life from death; thou hast continued abilities, and opportunity, to do thee service, to walk before thee in the land of the living; Blessed be thy glorious Name, O Father of mercies, and God of all consolation; blessed be thy Name for ever, and ever, and let all thy people say, Amen.

Secondly, Correct that errour of your judgements, wherein I know you please your selves many of you ignorantly, as if it were a matter of grace more then ordinary to pray for death untimely in respect of the tearm of nature: This hold for a Rule; I dare say, it is certain; While God gives ability to do him service, or opportunity, or hath use of us in meanest service; be it but, as *David*, to declare Gods righteousnesse to the generation present; as *Hezekiah*, the father to the childe to shew Gods truth, *Isa.* 38. 19. so long ought we to desire to live; we sinne, in wishing our premature death. And well weigh it, and tell me whether such desires, upon what ground soever, argue not rather self-love; more love of our selves, then of our God; when God hath use of our service on earth, to wish our selves out of the world. Who can shew me any Saint of God, in old, or new Testament, who

ever

ever made prayer to God, or approved himself in the desire of death, when God had use of him here in the land of the living, without apparant fault: *Elias*, * he indeed in a passion prayes unto God for death; and his reason mark, (which should have been a reason rather to move him to pray for preservation of life) because now there was so great use of his service for the benefit of the Church. That of *Iob*, and *Ier.* 3. and *Ier.* 20. are apparantly passionate wishes of flesh and blood, arising from discontent at their crosses, which I think no gracious man allows in himself, or another.

* 1 Kings 19.4, 14.

And make what pretences you will; I dare undertake to evidence the prayers, the desires are sinfull, to wish death as long as there is ability, or opportunity to do God any service upon earth, or use of service upon earth. First, That of * *Iob*, upon this ground, *I have not yet denied the words of the holy One*; seems fair; neither can I blame his fear of his own infirmity: but yet there was faithlesnesse in the wish, for hath not God promised to support? 1 *Cor.* 10.13. Secondly, That of imperfection of grace, and sinnes by defect in the service of God, is as plausible as any thing to legitimate the desire; yet it proceeds from a false ground: It is false, that the longer we live, the more we sinne; if we be Gods, the longer we live, the lesse we sinne; sinne is mortified daily, and we bring forth * more fruit in our age. Thirdly, That of evills to come, from which to be taken away aforehand, is promised as a favour, *Isa.* 58.1 and

* Iob 6.

* Psal. 92.14.

and 2 *Kings* 22. 20. yet warrants not the wish: This let us be assured of. First, Simply if we speak; Prorogung of life to the utmost tearm of nature is the blessing; untimely death, simply considered, is the judgement; That it turns to a blessing is by accident, it is a blessing by accident. Secondly, I do not think but *Iermiahs* blessing was in the fruit as great as *Iosiahs*; for though *Iosiah* saw not the evill, yet *Ieremiah* endured the evill with patience, in the mean time did service to God in sustaining his Church; *Iosiah* went before *Ieremiah* to heaven, *Ieremiah* had more glory in his time. In a word, Some God takes away from evills to come in mercy, and favour, they are such as he sees likely to be overcome of the evills; in that respect he shews them favour; others he reserves to taste the evills, to give testimony to his truth; To them this is a favour, yea and simply the greater favour.

Is the question, which is rather to be desired? *Answ.* Simply if we speak, Prerogation of life; for that is natively the blessing. Secondly, For the comparison, it is to be measured by the quality, and state of the persons; Hath God use of their service upon earth? First, They ought to preferre Gods glory before their own salvation. Secondly, They shall be assured, God will give issue with the temptation, 1 *Corinth.* 10. 13. Thirdly, Neither loose they ought in the measure of their reward; as, according to pleasures in sin, so much torment; so according to pains in this life, is the measure of our glory.

If you will ask me, how we shall know whether God hath use of our service upon earth? Surely, The question is obscure, and curious; to be measured onely by continuance of abilities, opportunities, or calling from God: But because it is uncertain; This rule walk by. First, Though simply, if we compare state with state, it is best to be with Christ; for that is the end of our life, there is perfection, and consummation of holinesse, there is fulnesse of joy, and pleasures for evermore. Yet, secondly, for thee, whose service God hath use of on earth, it is better to live on earth the yeers of *Methuselah*, doing God service, then to be whirried, as *Elias*, with chariots of Angels presently into heaven: In heaven thou hast thine owne glory, on earth thou promotest Gods glory, and in the end, findest a glorious reward, proportioned to thy measures of doing service to God here upon earth.

What then may we say of them, whom God hath taken away in the prime of their life, as that peerlesse *Iosiah*, amongst the posterity of *David*? *Answ.* What? but what Saint *Paul* speaks of the Martyrs, The world was not worthy of them, that people unworthy of such a pearl, a Prince so peerlesse as was *Iosiah*; for now the Lord remembred the sinnes of *Manasseh*, and the time of vengeance drew neer upon that rebellious, and gainsaying people. Secondly, Or that God saw their weaknesse, and some likelihood of their corruption, therefore took them away by death, as *Henoch* by transmutation, *Ne malitia mutaret intellectum.*

tellectum. Thirdly, Or they had served their generation according to Gods will, as is said of *David*, *Act.* 13. 36. therefore fell asleep; or, as our Saviour, Had finished the work which God had assigned them to do, and were therefore taken away unto glory, *Ioh.* 17. they had finished their course, and kept the faith, and were now to receive their crown of their righteousnesse, 2 *Tim.*4.7,8. And yet it is true, while God gives ability, and opportunity to do him service upon earth, while he calls us to do him service upon earth, while he hath use of our service of men upon earth; it is his great blessing to reserve us to walk before him in the land of the living; to be preferred in our choice, before the hastening of our salvation, and glory in the kingdome of heaven.

Blessed be thy glorious Name, most glorious God, Father, Sonne, and holy Ghost, for all thy mercies, for thy marvellous loving kindnesse shewen to me in a strange city, in rescuing me from the gates of death, and from the jaws of the grave, in love delivering my soul from the pit of corruption, preserving my life to walk before thee in the land of the living. Lord God, what shall I render unto thee, for all thy benefits thou hast done unto me, for this unspeakable mercy thou hast vouchsafed unto me? It is little, too little for so great a favour to praise thy power, thy goodnesse, thy grace, thy mercy, thy truth; and my heart is too narrow to comprehend the heighth and depth of thy love to me in Christ Iesus: even in this one favour vouchsafed unto me, Lord enlarge my

heart and affections fill it with love of thy Majestie, zeal of thy glory. Take up body and soul, what ever I am, or have to thine own use: Behold Lord, truly I am thy servant, desiring to do thee service upon earth; Lord accept my endeavours, pardon mine imperfections, give more strength to perform, Lord, I am willing to do it, yea, my heart is ready: Be pleased Lord to accept these calves of my lips, this poor weak morning sacrifice of praise, and thankesgiving, which goeth not out of fained lips; Lord thou knowest it, accept it therefore for thy promise sake, for thy mercy sake, for the merits sake of sonne Iesus, the Mediatour of all Grace, and mercy to the sonnes of men: To him with thee, O Father of mercies, O holy Spirit Comforter of the Church, and chosen children, be all honour and glory, for this, and all other thy mercies towards all Churches of thy Saints, for ever and ever. Amen.

That might here be annexed; by all good means to cherish life, that we may perform the service God expects from us.

Scripture points us to four causes, or means of shortening life. First, Immoderate sorrow, especially for things of this life, *Prov.* 12. 25. *Heavinesse makes the heart stoope, Prov.*15.13. *By sorrow of heart the spirit is broken*; see 2 *Cor.* 7. 10. Secondly, Intemperance, whether in diet, or other luxurie; which what tends it unto but the shortening of the dayes? *Plures gula, quam gladius*; and it is that the Lord foretells to men given to the flesh, *Prov.* 5. 11. *The flesh, and body are consumed*; see *Prov.* 6. 26. and 7. 23. Thirdly, To this adde those

those other grosse crimes, for which God hath threatened untimely death; the blood-thirsty and deceitfull live not out half their dayes; either the sword of the Magistrate seizeth on them, or else Gods immediate hand taketh them away, as we see in *Absalon*, *Adonijah*, *&c.* Fourthly, immoderate pining of the body; with immoderate fasting, watching, labour, though never so religiously imployed; see *Col.* 2. 23.

If we follow the second reading, which perhaps is here implied, it implies the promise, or vow of *David*, in thankfulnesse unto God for his marvellous deliverance vouchsafed unto him. Wherein are three things considerable. First, The act. Secondly, The manner. Thirdly, The mean. First, The act is to walk, or to serve God. Secondly, The manner, in sincerity. Thirdly, The meane, implyed in the Trope, *Before him.*

But so see we the generall fruit of all Gods gracious deliverances vouchsafed us, & the duty we owe him in liew thereof; that is, to do him service in that rank, or station, whatsoever it is God hath placed us in; so *Zacharie* speaking of the end of that great deliverance from spirituall enemies, it is to serve him in holinesse, and righteousnesse, *Luke* 1. 74. 75. and *Psal.* 50. 15, 23. hence *Davids* acknowledgement, and protestation, *Psal.* 116. 16, 17, 18.

To fill up the meaning, that must be weighed; That the Lord expects, in respect of speciall favours, speciall service; increase of our measures, according to the measures of our abilities: Ye

must understand, that there is upon all a generall obligation, and duty of service that they owe unto God; arising from benefits they enjoy in common with others, as Creation, Providence, Redemption, Word, &c. which bond, yet by speciall favours, grows more strait; especially when they grow towards personall, and we become after a sort proprietaries in them: for example, *Israel* had a bond of service, as heathen, from Creation, and Providence, but much more for the specialty of Gods favour in their deliverance from Ægypt; wherefore that is prefixed as a reason of obedience to the Decalogue, *Exod.* 20. 2. in shewing his word unto *Iacob*, his statutes, and ordinances unto *Israel* so is the bond yet more increased, *Psal.* 147. 20. *Levi* had yet more then *Israel* God had singled them out of all the Tribes of *Israel* to minister before him, *Num.* 16. 9. therefore he looked to be sanctified by them especially, *Levit.* 10. 3. wherefore, see this a circumstance of aggravation upon *Hezekiah*, 2 *Chron.* 32. 25. that he rendred not unto God, according to the benefit done unto him.

Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodnesse, and declare the wonders he doth unto the sonnes of men! Psal. 107. 8, *&c.* I mention not to us of this Kingdome the common favours other Churches have enjoyed with us, the specialty of Gods mercy, his Personall favour, *Lord! how have they been magnified, and made marvellous upon us?* How many strange, little lesse then miraculous deliverances God hath bestowed upon us; in that Invasion attempted

tempted in 88. from Gunpowder-Treason; It is our shame, and sinne, that we have not in zeal for our God become presidents, precedents to other Churches; yet would God, we had but equalled them, how should I hope the Lord would still continue his favours upon us!

But what hath this wrought in us? but fearfull pride, security, licenciousnesse, even by that occasion, that we have experimented the Lord to be so gracious unto us; as if we were perswaded as Jews, *Ier.* 7. either that the form of godlinesse obliged him unto us, and the very name of a Church must link him to our State; or that his promises of favour were absolute, without condition, God binding himself to us, without expecting performance of our Restipulation: Nay, see if these favours of God have not turned to us as occasions to increase to more ungodlinesse; Do ye thus require the Lord? *Deut.* 32.6.

Two things I propound to Gods people to be meditated, the better to stirre them up to the duty. First, There is no so firme entail of Gods favours to any particular Church, but that disobedience, and unthankfulnesse, easily cuts off: The promise to Jews, how runnes it in faireſt tearms of perpetuity; *Here is my rest, here will I dwell for ever*, and that of *David*, *He should not lacke a man of his seed to sit upon his Throne for ever*: and yet is *Hierusalem* now become heaps, and that people have now long sitten without a King, without a Prince; How stands Gods truth then? First, It was meant with condition of their constant obedience;

dience; And secondly, to the spirituall seed, *Luke* 2.

The second thing is this; The more God hath magnified his favour, and mercy, to any people; in case of their unthankfulnesse, he hath the more encreased their vengeance; see *Mat.* 11. *Deut.* 28. *Levit.* 26. He hath made the Jews an astonishment, an hissing to all nations, his mercies were not more marvellous, then now their plagues are wonderfull; and take we heed, it prove not our condition: God hath begun to plague the cities where his Name was called upon, and his wrath * creeps in the Church, as *Micah* speaks, from *Lachish* to *Mareshah*, from *Mareshah* to *Adullam*, the glory of *Israel*: This onely is the odds; they drank first of the cup of Gods wrath, perhaps because the Lord reserves the dregs, the bitterest, and most banefull part for us; his hand is lifted up to strike, and is yet stayed, till it be more exalted: but this let us be assured of; the higher it lifts, the heavier it lights, the greater shall our stroke be.

* Mic. 1. 15.

It shall behove us then, to notice the specialty of Gods favour, and mercy, to us, I mean our personall favours, our privileges; the favours, wherein we have had our propriety; That, if any thing, excites to thankfulnesse.

Surely there is none of us but have our privilege, if not in the favours, yet in the manner, or measure, or means of convayance, I for my part can speak it: This in short let us notice, though for common favours, an ordinary measure of service

vice may seem competent, yet for specialty of love, the Lord expects a more then ordinary service to be performed: Oh Lord enlarge my heart, incline it to that measure.

The manner follows; It is as before him, that is, as * Scripture every where interprets its self, in truth, in sincerity, and singlenesse of heart, which is the generall qualification of all services of God, that forms them to acceptation. * See Gen.17.1. Isa.38.3.

Thus understand, the Matter of all services performed unto God, whether in common, or speciall calling, is the same, and they are, for the substance of the act, performable, as well by hypocrites, as by Gods children: The form or maner of performance, in sincerity, is peculiar to Gods children: for example, to * preach Christ, & to publish the mystery of the Gospel; that is, of remission of sins, and salvation by the death, & obedience of Jesus Christ; so doth *Iudas* as well as *Peter*; so did *Demas* as well as *Paul*; but, saith *Paul*, they not sincerely, as appears by their motive and intention; so of * *Amaziah*, in point of justice, and ordering the Common-wealth as a Magistrate, he did that which was good in the sight of the Lord; here was his bane, he did it not with a perfect heart: They come unto thee as thy people cometh, saith the * Prophet, and they sit before me as my people, and they hear thy words; yet do they but flatter with their double hearts, they hear, but will not do, their heart runnes after their covetousnesse: What could *Elias* have done more then * *Iehu* for the substance of the Act? He beats down the Image of *Baal*, slayeth his Priests, and * See Ps.1.15.16 * 2 Chron.25.2. * Ezek.33.31. * 2 Kings 10.

all his Servitours; and for this service the Lord rewards him; yet departed he not from the sinnes *Ieroboam*, 2 *Kings* 10. 30, 31, 32. wherefore, *Hos.* 1. 4. even this fact of *Iehu* is punished in his posterity.

Sincerity wherein it consists.

What is sincerity?

Answ. The Scripture hath two tearms to expresse it. First, * ἁπλότης, Simplicity, or singlenesse of heart, which commonly they thus interpret, when there is a concord twixt the action, and the affection, twixt the heart and profession; to which commonly they oppose ὀφθαλμοδουλία, eye-service; we read in Scripture of a heart and a heart, a double heart; in *Ecclesiasticus* we finde a wo unto that sinner that goes two wayes; the description of an hypocrite; whose embleme is a Waterman on the *Thames*, his face, and armes, and whole body with full strength is towards the Bridge, and yet is his course intended Westward; see *Ezek.* 33. 31. *Come see*, saith * *Iehu, how zealous I will be for the Lord of Hosts*, so indeed his act pretended; Ah hypocrite, it was for nothing but to secure the kingdome to him, and his posterity.

* Ephes. 6. 5. Col. 3. 22.

* 2 Kings 10. 16.

The second tearm is, ὅλη καρδία, the whole heart, which the old Scripture calls *Cor perfectum*, a * perfect heart; the meaning is, when the utmost of our strength and endeavour in gracious abilities is extended to do God service; as *David*, *Psal.* 119. *With my whole heart have I sought thee*; that howsoever there be, and will be defects in our best performances; yet we are able to say, it issues not from want of * will, and unfained desire, or strenuous

* Gen. 17. 1. & 1 Chron. 28. 9. Isa. 38. 3.

* See Heb. 13. 18

strenuous endeavour, *Rom.*7.18. but meerly from defect of ability.

Evidences of it you may thus number. First, When it is according to all Gods Commandments, *Luke* 1.6. that there is not a duty, nor parcell of duty, which wittingly, and willingly a man omits; see also, *Psal.* 119. 6. Understand it thus. First, As farre as knowledge, and illumination goes, and opportunities are offered for their performance; the whole of mans duty, *Paul*, *Tit.* 2. hath referred to three generall heads. First, Purity. Secondly, Justice. Thirdly, Sobriety. In one of these all hypocrites have failed; in all of these Gods children are found upright. *Notes of sincerity.*

Secondly, Constancie in Gods service without defection, accompanies sincerity, *Psal.* 119. 33. It is not the hypocrites flashes, *Matth.*13.21. be they never so eager, and fervent, that forms our services to sincerity; *Iehu* drives in fury; Better the slow pace, so we keep going in the right way, and sooner we come to our heaven; yet pardon we must all ray for, interruptions in courses of obedience, as *Peter*, *David*; and for our standings at a stay; for abatements of our fervour, when the temper of the Angel of *Ephesus* shall, as not seldome, light on us, *Rev.*2.3.

Thirdly, The contentment, and chearfulnesse, and * willingnesse we finde in doing God service specially is remarkable, *Psal.* 40. 8. I am content to do thy will, O Lord, saith *David*; glad of occasion to do God service; Oh that my heart were

* See 1 Chron. 28.9. Ephes.6.7. Isa.58.13.14.

made so direct, *Ps.* 119. whereas it is a wearinesse to the hypocrite, *Mal.* 1.13.

Movites hereunto. First, Weak services sincerely performed have acceptance with God more then the more glorious that are done in hypocrisie, *Pro.* 15. 8. Secondly, Defects are winked at; Lord! how many? while, in the main, the heart is upright, see in *Asa*, and *Ihoshaphat*, *&c.* Thirdly, The reward certain.

The Mean remains: *Before God:* Meditation of Gods Omnipresence, see *Ps.*139. *Heb.*4.12. 1 *Chr.* 28.9. To ignorance, or unbeleef, or inconsideration of this principle, we may impute hypocrisie, all evills; see *Ps.*10.11. and 73.11. and 94.7.

Thus for confirmation of our judgements in that principle. First, Let us consider Gods effects in his creatures; he hath given us eyes to see, ears to hear, hearts to understand; and can we then suppose himself void of that faculty? see *Ps.*49.9. Secondly, We are his workmanship; our thoughts and motions of our hearts are, for the substance of them, his operations; the ill application is from us, the draught is from God. Thirdly, His word in our mouthes searcheth to the discerning of the thoughts, *Heb.*4.12. and this, me thinks, should make an Athiest say, God is in us of a truth; see 1 *Cor.*14.25. Fourthly, Our conscience hath this power, 1 *Joh.*3.20. *How much more God, who is greater then our hearts, &c.*

Lord, Thou hast dealt graciously with thy servants, and magnified thy mercy to us in this kingdome; pardon we pray thee our unthankfulnesse,

stirre

ſtirre up our hearts to more diligence in thy ſervice, leſt we provoke thee to make us ſpectacles of thy wrath, as thou haſt hitherto graciouſly made us of thy mercy: And Lord, purge our hearts of the leaven of hypocriſie, that in ſingleneſſe of heart we may ſerve thee; To this end, cauſe us alwayes to conſider that we are in thy preſence, to whoſe eyes all things are naked, and uncovered; Hear us, we beſeech thee, and anſwer us for thy Sonne our Saviours ſake, Jeſus Chriſt. Amen.

VERSE. X.

I beleeved, therfore have I ſpoken: I was greatly afflicted.

COnnexion this; Why all this? *Anſw. I beleeved, therefore have I ſpoken*; the ſenſe, ſee 2 *Cor*.4.13. The particulars are. 1. His Act. 2. The iſſue, or fruit of that Act. In the Act again we conſider. 1. What it is to beleeve. 2. What it was that *David* here now beleeved.

For the firſt, Firſt, There is doubting, that is, when a man hangs in *æquilibrio* in even poyſe betwixt both parts of the Contradiction, as ſuppoſe the queſtion were, Whether *Adam* fell immediately upon his Creation? Secondly, There is ſuſpition, that is, When a man hath ſome inclination to beleeve the thing to be true, meerely out of the poſſibility of the thing to be, as ſuppoſe the queſtion were, Whether Chriſt ſhould have been incarnate, if man had never fallen? Thirdly, There is opinion, that is when a man hath ſome probabilities inducing him to beleeve the thing

propounded to be true, as if the question were, Whether we shall know each other in heaven? Fourthly, There is Science, when a man upon certain demonstrative proofs assents as upon certainty to the Trueth of the thing propounded, suppose the question to be, Whether there be a God? whether this God be one? Fiftly, There is *Fides*, when a man firmly assents to the trueth of the proposition, not for argument probable, or demonstrative, but for the authority of the *Testis*, or witnesse that doth speak it; as for example, Whether God be One and Three? There can be no argument, *a priori*, brought to demonstrate it, onely because God testifies it to be so, Who best knows himself, and the divers manners of existance: Now, firmly to assent to this Article, is an Act of Faith.

What was it that *David* professeth here to beleeve?

Answ. It was, That he should walk before God in the land of the living.

The *quere* is, Whence was this Testimony?

Answ. It might be, that he had, as * *Hezekiah*, his word from God, that hee should live to raign over Israel, notwithstanding all the oppositions of *Saul*; Nay, questionlesse it is true, he had from *Samuels* mouth such assurance, that he should raign over Israel, 1. *Sam.* 16.12.

* Isa. 38.

Secondly, There is a Two-fold Testimony of God. First, One is Verball. Secondly, Another is Reall, as for example, When the Apostles preached Christ to the Gentiles, they testified it was he,

he, whom God had appointed to be Saviour of the World; this was a Verball Testimony. Secondly, But God confirmed this word by miracles, by signes, and wonders, This was a Reall Testimony, *Heb.* 2.4.

But whereto serveth all this?

Answ. It is well, if from this you understand the nature of Faith; wherein who almost erres not? not every perswasion, or firm assent to a thing as true, is divine Faith; Saint *Paul* saith of himself before his Conversion, *Act.* 26. 9. he thought, and was perswaded he might do many things against the Name of *Iesus*; according to that of our Saviour, * *They that kill you shall think they do God good service*; And who makes question, but these all were lead by a word of God, sounding to their apprehension such, as carryed away their Conclusion cleare. I am perswaded it is true, there is many a Papist in this Kingdom, thinks truly, and is throughly perswaded, that all the errors of the *Trent* Councill are Gods Trueth; and they are not all so sottish, but they see Texts of Scripture alledged to that end. And what can you think of Anabaptists, have they not Scripture, to induce them to beleeve that Children ought not to be baptized? What of Brownists? Have they not * Scripture for their separation? *Tertullian* did no wrong, when he said Scriptures were *officina hæresium*, a shop of Heresies, if by Scriptures you understand the Scriptures taken after the Letter; for it is true, the Letter is often fairer for Hereticks, then for Orthodox Christians

* Ioh. 16.2.

* 2 Cor. 6.17.

ans; as that passage was for *Arrius*, *Pater major est me*, The Father is greater then I: I spare mentioning the errours of our own people; onely I advise.

First, Beware how you make scripture sound otherwise, then the Inspirer of Scripture, meant it; and this know, not every conclusion, or Article that hath the Letter of Scripture fair, is Gods Testimony; but onely the Scripture taken in true sense, after the intension of him, who inspired it.

For my part, I say as *Moses*, would God you did all prophesie, and were able to interpret! But this let me tell you, it is fearfull taking Gods Name in vain, when men shall peremptorily say, God said what never came into his heart: Said God ever, Infants should not be baptized? It never came into his heart: Said God ever, that we may have no commerce with wicked men in word, and Sacraments? or that otherwise we could not be assured, we were ever taken out of the world; that is, out of the state of the world? He never said it, nor did it once come into his heart. Said God ever unto the people, It shall be lawfull for you to interpret Scripture publickly, or privately, doubtfull Scriptures, I mean? or, Did he ever promise, ye should know what was concealed in them, but by your ministers? He never said it, it never came into his heart to think it: It was never Gods minde, the people should be their own guides; for if so, he would never have sent *Philip* to guide the Eunuch, *Act.* 8. 31.

31. nor Saint *Peter* to teach *Cornelius*, *Act*.10. Think of it as you pleaſe, it is not my Popery, but your Pride to think, or do otherwiſe. Secondly, This well helps us to diſſolve the doubt Papiſts caſts on us, when we teach, that the Aſſurance we have of Gods love in particular to us is a point of Faith:

They ask, Where is our Word?

Anſw. To which many things might be anſwered, Firſt, That we have a word Intentionally particular, as when Saint *Peter* ſaith, *To* * *you were the Promiſes made*, it is all one as if he had ſaid to thee, and thee. Secondly, *Generale applicatum ad hunc & hunc* is æquipollent to a particular, as when they in their penetentiall *Forum* ſay, *abſolvo te*, ſo we when by Sacrameuts we apply the generall promiſe. Thirdly, Gods Teſtimony is not all Vocall, there is a reall Teſtimony Gods work in us, 1 *Ioh*.5.10. He that beleeveth in the Sonne of God hath this witneſſe in himſelf, his very beleeving the impreſſion of Faith on his ſoul, is Gods Teſtimony; wherefore ſuch are ſaid to be ſealed by the Spirit of God, 2 *Cor*. 1.22.

* Act.2.39.

Follows now the fruit of *Davids* faith, in theſe words; *Therefore have I ſpoken*: It lovs not to conceal, delights rather to utter its Credulity, *pro loco & tempore*, ſee 2 *Cor*.4.13. *Rom*.10.10. alſo *Pſal*. 40.9.10.

How farre we ſtand bound to the performance, is matter of profitable enquiry, and in theſe times (though peaceable) ſo nething neceſſary?

This is the Reſolution for the generall. Firſt,

It being a precept affirmative, though it binds *semper*, yet it binds not *ad semper*, nor is absolutely necessary to salvation to be actually performed; save only *pro loco, & tempore*; suppose when it draws with it neglect of honour due to God, or edification & furtherance in faith to brethren. The Precept touching confession is two wayes to be conceived. First, Negatively, binding not to deny. Secondly, Affirmatively, binding to confesse. Not to deny the faith at any time, we are bound at all times upon pain of damnation; whether this deniall be by words, or deeds, or signes; Christ thunders, speaks not, *Luke 9. 26.* Secondly, The tears were bitter which Saint *Peter* wept after this sinne, *Matth. 26. 75.* Thirdly, Church-Censures in all times severe against it, admitting none to reconciliation, but after tedious, and longsome penance. Fourthly, No marvell, for that is *simpliciter, & ex se malum.*

Conside 2 Thes. pag. 71, 72, 73. & in ca. 1. v. 11

Now, when, or in what case we are bound to actuall, and open confession of faith upon pain of damnation, (I suppose in times of persecution) is matter of difficult resolution: Rules herein some thus assigne: Such confession is sometimes an act of religion, as when without it the honour due to God, and his truth, should fall to the ground, then a duty to confesse. Secondly, Of duty, either by courage to win an alien, or confirm a weakling, or to prevent apostacie of the wavering; then a duty to confesse. Thirdly, Of justice, in respect of the person a man sustains, or office he bears, suppose of a Pastour, or Teacher in the Church; then

then a duty to confesse: Howbeit, when religion, or charity, or justice binde to confesse, they leave us to the dictate of prudence.

We have a more sure word of prophesie, to which we shall do well to attend; That one Text in Saint *Peter*, as to my apprehension it (sounds) speaks more fully to guide us, then all the voluminous writings of their Angelicall, and Seraphicall Doctours; *Be ready always, &c.* Rules these; First, *Secundum animi preparationem*, The precept of confession binds all, so that we must be ready at all times to make confession of faith, when God calls thereto; yea, though death stand ready to deterre us; see *Luke* 9. 23. *Take up the Crosse daily*; 1 *Cor.* 15. 31. *Die daily*. Secondly, When actuall confession is necessary, as when our confession puts on the nature of an Apologie, or necessary defence, and justification of truth exagitated by oppositions, and calumnies of adversaries, or is endangered to suppression by violence of persecution; then say the Lord calls thee to confesse thy faith, then think a wo belonging not onely to the denyer, but even to the betrayer of the faith. Thirdly, Especially, if there be *Amici*, one that of authority interrogates, or else, of necessity begs of thee an opening of thine understanding, and credulity in the mystery of faith in Christ. Other questions here also fall in to be discussed as pertinent to this purpose; As, First, Whether it may not be lawfull to conceal our faith in times of danger? or, whether it be lawfull to flie in times

* 1 Pet. 3. 15.

of persecution? or, whether it be warrantable ultroneously to offer our selves to martyrdome? &c. For the plenary resolution of each whereof, together with their severall applications, I remit the Reader to my Notes upon the 2 *Thes.* 1. 11. where these questions are purposely, and upon somewhat like occasion, largely discussed, and resolved.

Verse. X, XI.

I was greatly afflicted: I said in my haste, All men are lyars.

Προλητικῶς annexed, This Passage is here brought in by way of *Prolepsis*, or of Anticipation; as if he had said, Yet conceive me not as vaunting of such perfection of faith in these afflictions, as if I had not so much as conflicted with infidelity; For I must confesse, I found more then wavering in the exercise of faith, I said, *All men are lyars.*

The words then tend to mitigate what he said of the strength of faith; and in summe, are a confession of the defects he found in the exercise of faith: wherein considerable are. First, The sin, I said, All are lyars. Secondly, The cause, or mean-accidentall of his sinne, Sore affliction. Thirdly, The next occasion of it, His hasty, and unadvised passion.

Sense. Affliction we call all those pressures outward, or inward, which commonly come under the

the tearm of *Malum pœnæ*, which deprive us of those things that are good to sense.

Their lightnesse, or greatnesse, is commonly measured by the good they deprive us of, in state, in fame, in person, or dignity, &c. or by the measure, and degree wherein they strike us in either, or else by our esteem, and apprehension of the good they deprive us of, and they are commonly greater, or lesse in our sense, according to the price, or esteem we set upon the good thing whereof they strip us: Let a worldling be touched in his goods, it grieves him more then if he be robbed of name, of health, of children; Touch a parent in the dearling, that is a great affliction: In a word, mostly they are lighter, or greater, according to our apprehension; though they have in them a reall lightnesse, or gravity, according to the kinde, or degree of impression; such *Davids* here.

I said in my haste: Some render, *In præcipitantia*, some, *In ecstasi*; he means, in the haste, and violence of his passion, before he had thorowly deliberated on what he should say or think, as *Psal.* 31. 22.

All men are lyars: Is that a fault? Is there not truth in the assertion? *Rom.* 3. 4.

Answ. It is true, all men are lyars, *Comparative ad Deum*, Shall man compared with God be righteous? Mans righteousnesse is more then monstruous in that comparison, his truth, in respect of Gods, is meer falshood and lying; as there is none good but God onely, namely, originally

and essentially, so none is true but God, in like sense; yet as *Barnabas* was a * good man, by participation, so are men all that are sanctified; so truth we partake from God in our renovation, this being part of the Image of God: Take man in his naturall inclinations, so he is a lyar, a murderer, what not? Yet take him as regenerate, and sanctified, so he hates lying, and speaks * truth that is in his heart: But last of all, ye must understand, there are some men that in some things are privileged from lying, speaking by an infallible Spirit; as Prophets, and Apostles in all they spake, and wrote, as instruments, or Scriveners of the holy Ghost, so were they privileged from lying; * *My tongue the pen of a ready writer:* They spake as inspired by the holy Ghost, 2 *Pet.* 1. 21. so they could not erre, or lie in any thing they delivered to the Church, or to any person they spake unto as from God: Now this was *Davids* sinne, that in the generallity, he wrapt in *Samuel* also, who had spoken unto him in the Name of the Lord, and assured him of succeeding *Saul* in the kingdome of *Israel*, and of stablishing his throne over that kingdome; and this is the fault *David* confesseth here of himself: Lo here then, to what exigents, and extremities of distemper Gods great servants are brought through great afflictions; to doubt, to question, yea, in passion to deny the truth of God, and his fidelity: conferre that, *Psal.* 89. 19. 37. 38. *&c.* To like end tend, the whole 37. and 73. *Psalmes*, though, in part, on another ground: How violent impressions

* Act. 11. 24.

* Psal. 15. 2.

* Psal. 45. 1.

sions afflictions have had in men most renowned, *Iob*, *Ieremie*, *Peter*, many other servants of God, Scripture histories abundantly teach you.

Reasons if you shall ask me, I can give none better then these. First, Nature is fertile of all sinnes; no sinne, nor degree of sinne, may seem strange to us in any man, so farre as he is naturall; not blasphemy, not Atheisme, not infidelity; let it therefore prevail above grace, as oft it * doth, the best men will shew, what they are by nature. Secondly, Next, is divine desertion, Gods leaving man to himself, as oft in particulars he doth, so he did *Hezekiah*, 2 *Chron.* 32. 31. whereof if ye shall ask reasons, take these. First, To humble us. Secondly, To make us hold fast by God. Thirdly, To teach us compassion, *Luke* 22. 32. Thirdly, What should I tell you of the Devills suggestions, which as we seldome want, so least under heavie afflictions, see *Iob* 2. 4, 5.

* Rom. 7. 23.

Marry, if you enquire of the occasions, I can shew you many. First, Overconfidence of our own strength, by which occasion *David* confesseth, his great trouble fell, *Psal.* 30. and by this reason fell *Peter*, *Matth.* 26. Secondly, Next, if not ignorance, (for so farre I am loath to charge so great Saints) yet inconsideration: First, Of the manner of convaying promises, whether temporall, or spirituall, or eternall, which are not absolute, but conditionall; yea, even in spiritualls tied to means; and with reservation of power to the promiser to chasten, try, manifest grace, &c. Secondly, Of the strange means by which God brings

brings his purposes to passe, even by such oft-times which seem to overthrow the promise, and to crosse the performance of it; as when *David* hath promise of the kingdom, what lesse appears then a kingdome, in the whole course of *David*, so many perills he was plunged into? Thirdly, You may observe to be giving leave to reason to oversway in decision of things, which are but meerly upon faith, and power of the promiser; so *Sarah*, and *Zacharie* fell upon their fidelity; she laughing at the promise, he doubting, because he saw all in nature against it.

Vse. 1. It is a Rule we give, that no man may withdraw himself from any crosse, or affliction God shall call him to suffer; see *Heb.* 10. 38. Yet secondly, from this ground, let no man throw himself into unnecessary affliction, much lesse wish, or pray for it; For, knowest thou what thy issues shall be? I mean, when thou goest out of thy wayes, and headlongest thy self into such temptations? Have you forgotten Saint *Peters* issue, upon that occasion? Who bad, or warranted him to enter the high Priests hall? there to hazard himself to death; see 1 *Cor.* 10. 12. Look you, there is difference twixt a great affliction imposed by God, and little crosse drawn upon our selves; Be it never so grievous, when God imposeth it, rest assured, he will strengthen, 1 *Cor.* 10 13. but when we put it upon our selves, then fear, God surely punisheth such presumption.

There be of you who long for dayes of persecution, who dares pray for death, before God sends

sends it, or wish him to send it, before the time of nature, or perhaps the hour of prescience; how know you, you shall be able to endure the pangs thereof, I mean, when you call for it? Hath God made a promise in any affliction we seek, or cast our selves upon, to support us? Shew us that promise, and then insult, else sure we know not our selves; God who made us, knows us and our mould, it is his great mercy that he keeps us from temptations of our forefathers, for, a thousand to one, but we should perish under them.

Secondly, Learn hence to moderate your censures in respect of Gods children, and their foulest falls; especially, when you see great, and violent temptations pressing thereto: Two faults ye shal commonly observe in men towards other mens faultings by such occasion; First, That we are ready to condemn of hypocrisie, as *Iobs* friends, and that for the state of their persons; or else secondly, marvellous rigorous and austere in censuring the sinne, and then we cannot satisfie our selves in our Rhetoricall amplification, by all circumstances of the sinnes that they have fallen into; Oh that we could remember that of Saint *Paul*, * *we may be tempted*; yea, and as fouly overcome, as they that have foulest fallen; let not him who girds on his armour, boast as he that puts it off: excellent is that advise of Saint *Bernard*, excuse his intention, if thou canst not his action, or if the fall be so foul as to admit no extenuation; yet say, *Vehemens fuit tentatio, quid de me illa fecisset, si accepisset in me similiter potestatem?* *Vse. 2.* * Gal. 6. 1.

Thirdly, You will say perhaps, what odds twixt infidelity of *David*, and that of others, professed Infidels?

Answ. In the fact none more then in other sins; *Davids* adultery and murder is *Quoad genus facti*, all one with that of *Amnon* and *Absolom*, yet a difference is to be seen twixt one and other; Two you have here expressed; First, It is not a light affliction that occasions Gods Saints to doubt, or murmure, or grow incredulous: the devill was deceived, when he said of *Iob*, that his losse of goods, or children, would make him curse God to his face; * *In all this Iob sinned not with his mouth, nor charged God foolishly*: But great, and violent afflictions, they work sometimes strangely, even upon gracious dispositions; the least losse alienates an hypocrite, if it be but lack of plenty, it makes them ready to devote themselves to the service of the * Queen of heaven. Secondly, Their infidelity is passionate, and indeliberate, when passions indeed cloud judgment, disturb memory, blind certified reason, then ye shall see they shew themselves men, but give them time to pause, & to debate the matter with solid judgement, that they are masters of their wits, and passions are calmed, then they can say, as the Prophet, *It is mine* * *infirmity*; then, they * be-beast themselves for such thoughts; then, as Saint *Peter*, *They go out, and weep* * *bitterly*: Now look to other men, that are habited in Infidelity, hardened in Atheisme, it is not passion that transports them, but in their best advised thoughts, they study to con-

* Iob 1. 22.

* Ier 44.17.

* Psal 77.10.

* Psal.73.22.

* Matth.26.75.

contradict the truth of God, and of such means, Saint * *James*, when he saith, *ἐξεπειρασμὸν*, it signifies the Discrutatour, or Disputer against the promise. * Iam.1.6.

It may be demanded, what moved *David*, or the Spirit that guided him, to publish this foul crime of himself?

Answ. For the generall, Gods Spirit leaving such records of humane frailty in great Saints, aimed at, First, Our humiliation, and fear; for if such Cedars fell, such prime Saints sinned so fouly, should we be high-minded, and not rather * fear? Secondly, Our circumspection and watchfulnesse against the occasions; wherefore ye have usually, together with the sinne, the occasion noted how they fell; Saint *Peter* through his presumption; *David* by precipitancie, and passion here, elsewhere by idlenesse into luxury, by luxurie into cruelty; note we it against like occasions. Thirdly, God would let us see what we are by nature the best of us, when we are left to our selves, secured from no sinne, be it never so notorious, or abominable; not from infidelity, not from blasphemy, &c. Fourthly, Even by this he would teach us, that the justification of the most righteous is of meer grace, which as it is the reason why we all carry about us a body of sinne in this life, so of the falls of all Gods greatest servants; wherefore I think it is, that men of greatest grace, have foulest falls noted of them, yea more then of meauer Saints. Fiftly, That humour of uncharitable, and mercilesse censuring of our * Rom.11.20.

brethren, overtaken by infirmity, God desires hereby to prevent, if it were possible; For why doest thou in it also condemn the generation of the just? These reasons of the generall.

But why the Penners of Scripture, such as *David* was, did record their own faults with such ingenuity, and candor? Our Divines take notice of a speciall reason of Gods ordinance, and providence disposing in that kinde; to wit, that men might be assured they sought not in their writings to advance themselves, or as Politiques to captivate the people to obedience of that holy Doctrine they taught, out of their sanctity, or dignity: For, would they then have polished their own blemishes? But that indeed they were over-ruled by a supreamer power, whose glory they sought, not their own, in penning the Scritures for behoof of posterity: wherefore observe scarcely any of the Pen-men of Scripture, but have their blemishes noted; *Moses* his own, and his brother *Aarons*; *Samuel* the foul falls of his children; *Isaiah* his own detracting; *Ieremie* his own cursing his birth; *Amos* his mean education; *Matthew* his Publicanisme; *Paul* his persecution; *David* here his infidelity, elsewhere, his lesse then blasphemy, *Psal.* 77. Are these the courses of Politicians? See heathenish Law-givers, how desirous they were to seem petty gods?

But so, even from this argument, which Scripture it self natively affords, may we help and cure our infidelity, touching the question so much controverted, whether Scriptures were inspired

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from God? I confesse, no man shall have firm perswasion of the Divine Authour of them, but by the Spirit of God, 1 *Ioh.* 5. 6. That is, by the holy impressions which by this Doctrine he fastens upon our souls; for it is no vocall, but a reall testimony; yet are there arguments also from consent, antiquity, fulfilling of prophesies, &c. of no small force to work conviction.

Lastly, whereas *David* confesseth his infidelity issued answerable from his violent passion; Take heed of passions hasty, and unadvised resolutions, whither may they carry us? Who knowes? To infidelity, to uncharitablenesse, to casting off of humanity? *A wise man will stablish his thoughts by Counsell:* Now unadvised resolutions are in two senses named, as there is a twofold ground for counsell to direct it self by. First, The one is, as Saint *Paul* calls it, Flesh and blood, carnall reason, whereon a man deliberating, shall finde a ground for the corruptest action to warrant, and encourage to it. Secondly, Now *David* he tells us of another Rule; *Thy statutes are the men of my Councell*, *Psa.* 119. 24. Now thus think, though according to flesh and blood they may seem advised resolutions; yet think, if they be not in their, First, Matter. Secondly, Measure. Thirdly, Manner of carriage subject to Gods Law, they are in Religion unadvised resolutions, see *Rom.* 8. 7. Yea, be they never so wise, yet so farre as they are not guided by religion, they are unadvised, they are foolish: 1 *Sam.* 16. *How long wilt thou mourn for Saul? is there no end of thy sorrow?*

This makes it Carnall, and take heed it occasion not more crosses. *Ionah* 4.4. When *Ionah* was so over-angry for Gods sparing *Nineveh*, saith God unto him, *Doest thou well to be angry?* It was unadvised Anger: It seemed an advised perswasion, which the elder brother would have fastned upon his father, Reason he had for it, He hath spent thy living with Harlots; It is true, yea, but he is a Penitent, is it not meet then we should joy? *Luk.*15. I love not to particularize, I know not what warrant I have for it; but this let me say; Whatsoever affection of wrath, or love, or Grief, is not in the ground and measure of it subject to the law of God, that's unadvised; Whatsoever resolution, seem it never so warrantable in Reason, is not subject to the Law of God, that's carnall, and to be reputed as foolish, and unadvised. Not to accept submission of a Penitent, not to joy in his penitency, (which Angels, and Saints, yea, God himself doth) not to notice the least degree of Grace, (and for it to thank God) not to cherish that Grace by all means, be it never so little, &c. These Resolutions are not from above, but they are Carnall, Sensuall, I pray God not * Devillish also.

*Iam.3.15.

VERSE.

Verse XII, XIII.

What shall I render unto the Lord, for all his benefits towards me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord.

THe second effect, or fruit sprung in *David* from meditation of Gods mercy, and grace in his deliverance, the summe of it is publique thankesgiving.

The Conveyance is in a Rhetoricall consultation, or deliberation with himself, as a man at a stand, or in a muse, seeing his many obligations to God by such favours vouchsafed, yet not able to recompense; something he knew must be done; What he should doe as best pleasing to God, he studies and deliberates with himself, and at last resolves.

The parts are Two. First, The Addubitation, *ver.* 12. Secondly, The Answer, or Resolution, *ver.* 13, 14.

He supposeth then, there is something which God expects from man in regard of his favours vouchsafed him; Wherefore it is blamefull in *Hezekiah*, that he **rendred not according to the Lords kindnesse*. That question of *Moses*, *Deut.* 10.12. *Now Israel, what doth the Lord require of thee?* supposeth that there is something expected, exacted; Whence is that tart reprehension, *Deu.* 32.6. *Do ye thus requite the Lord?* Yet take heed you erre not; not as an *ἀντιμισθία*, as a recompence sufficient for the least

* 2 Chro. 32.25.

least favours done unto us, our righteousnesse
* Psal.16.2. and Iob 22.2. and 35.7. * extendeth not to him, saith *David*; Thousands of Rams, ten thousand rivers of Oil, *Mic.6.7.* all are too little; Our Selves, our Lives, our Souls, our Bodies, *Rom.12.1.* They are not *Beneficij Compensatio*; they are onely Testimonies, and signes of Thankfulnesse, so exacted, and so onely accepted.

You have heard I think of *Meritum Congrui* amongst Papists, and (though not under that tearm) yet some such thing is pressed by others, that there is a congruence, a meetnesse, a kinde of duty God owes to his creature, in respect of his own Nature, whereby he is obliged to do good unto it, because it is his creature; *Mentior*, If I think not the generallity of our people in this point Popish, though ignorantly; so willingly they take notice of what God owes them out of his Nature, so hardly are they brought to understand the duty they owe to God: How many gracious benefits have we, do we daily receive from God? *His mercies*, saith the Prophet, *are*
* Lam.3.23. * *renewed every morning*; And meet they should, for he that made us, must save us: But what must he do, that is made? Nothing? For life, motion,
* Act.17.28. * being? Owe we nothing to our God, for the marvellous deliverance of our brethren, preservation of our souls from pestilence, Is there nothing due to our God? Not so much as obedience? Not so much as mending what is amisse? Not so much as parting with the momentany pleasures of sinne? Yet, well fare the old heathen! And I

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am perſwaded they ſhall riſe up in judgement againſt us, and ſhall condemn us; there was not a victory, or a deliverance, but wrung from them a ſacrifice to thoſe idols, which they adored as God, Chriſtians onely forſooth, God is of congruity at leaſt, obliged unto, &c. Looke you, Firſt, Congruity of doing good to the creature, in reſpect of God, ariſeth not from any thing he owes to the creature, but of that he owes to himſelf in reſpect of his own Nature.

Secondly, To ſay truth, there is no obligation of him to the creature, but what ariſeth from his voluntary and free promiſe; *Promittendo ſe fecit debitorem*; and whatſoever men, or Angels can claim from God, they muſt claim it *Sub titulo promiſſionis*.

Thirdly, Let us weigh that the things which God commands us, or exacts from us, he exacts not for his own benefit; before ever man or Angel was, he was God all-ſufficient, and he made not the world to acquire any thing to himſelf, which he was or had not, for he is *El-Schaddai*, αὐτάρκης: but to manifeſt, and to communicate his goodneſſe to the creature; and the end for which he commands, or exacts duty from us, is for our good, *Deut.* 10. 13. in keeping the Commandments there is great reward; to wit, to the keeper, not to the Preſcriber.

Fourthly, That this our want of rendring to God occaſions. Firſt, The diminiſhing of his bleſſings. Secondly, Yea, the utter removall, ſo we read how the Gentiles were not thankfull for

the light of nature, therefore God takes from them very naturall conscience, *Rom.* 1.26. Thirdly, Nay, usually turns blessings into curses, in stead of favours, powers down wrath, as on *Israel.*

What shall I render? You may not think *David* ignorant of that he enquires of; *Moses* had long ago resolved it, *Deut.* 10. 12. and himselfe here, *vers.* 13. and *Psal.* 50. see also *Mic.* 6. 6, 7. What then means the question?

Answ. Two things *David* commends unto us therein. First, That in our rendrings to God, we should not follow our self-wisdome, or will, but be well informed that what we perform, be accepted unto him: *Saul* professeth to mean well, 1 *Sam.* 15. 21, 22. when he reserved of the best of the cattell for sacrifice; yet for that he fulfilled his own wisdome more then Gods precept; the kingdome is rent from him, see also 1 *Sam.* 13. 12. so also *Paul, Col.* 2.

Reasons. First, That may be plausible, and pleasing in the eye of flesh, which is abominable in the sight of God; as when the Gentiles sacrificed sonnes and daughters to God, who doubts but by parting with things so dear, they thought to promerit God? Yet mark Gods Spirits censure of them, 1 *Cor.* 10. 20. The things which Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice not to God, but to devills. Intentionally think you? By no means, but in as much as they followed therein their own, and the devills will, rather then Gods Prescript, therefore they are said to sacrifice them to

Devills.

Devills. Secondly, You must remember what *Paul* hath, *Rom.* 8.7. wisdome of the flesh so farre as it is not subject to the Law of God, is enmity to him; and if there were nothing else but this, that it comes from his enemy, God accepts it not. Thirdly, Nay see how the Lord rejects sacrifices which himself prescribed; when in the manner of offering, they swerved from his prescript, *Isa.* 66. 3. He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man, &c. Why? The things were prescribed for the matter of sacrifice? Yea, but they have followed their own wayes; see also, *Isa.* 1. 12, 13, 14, 15. Who hath required these things at your hands? God prescribed the things; yet in as much as they were not indeed in the maner that he prescribed, they are as if they had been meer will-worship: of so much avail it is to be well informed of what God will accept.

That I may not runne out upon this occasion, to tax all that will-worship in the Church of *Rome*, let us be exhorted this to do: We have all in present been partakers of the blessing, by compassion, of deliverance in our brethren, if yet the bowels of compassion be in us; personally, of preservation, for God might as well have stricken us as them, as much merit in us as in them, perhaps more then in many.

What shall we render? Is a question meet for us? We may fall on that that will more provoke him; in that himself hath prescribed, we may erre in the *Modus*: Two things therefore I prescribe to every man willing to be informed of his

duty in this kinde. First, That for the matter of his service to be sure that he hath Gods word for his warrant; it is not difference of meats, or strict keeping of Lent, it is not numbring of prayers, &c. Who hath required these things at our hands? These have their place according to their kinde, and ends; but the main of all is this; First, For the generall, break off thy sinnes by righteousnesse, *Dan.* 4. 27. else fear, a worse thing will come unto thee, *Ioh.* 5. 14. Secondly, Order thy conversation aright, *Psal.* 50. 23. that is, in the actuall practise see thou conforme thy life to the Law of God. Thirdly, Serve him more diligently, *Hos.* 5. 15. It is one end of Gods afflictions, to quicken grace in us; think not the wonted measure of service will serve the turn, but now sith God gives thee rest from thy troubles and fears, think he lookes for thy service doubled from thee, if not in number of services, yet in fervency of performance.

But if in this blessing we would know what God lookes for from us; there is something for the quality of the judgement, wherein we may inform our selves, both for the sinnes, God would have us flie from, and duties he requires of us; God usually proportions his judgements to the quality of mens sinnes: Pestilence a contagious disease; the breath, the houses, the air infects them that come in it.

What if this be one of the sinnes that God plagues? Our neutrousnesse upon lewd society with Drunkards, with Whoremongers, with Idolaters;

laters; leprosie it self, nor pestilence is more contagious, yet will we into such company? we willingly sport our selves with their sinnes, unwillingly we shall be plagued with their plagues; It was wont to be a signe of righteousnesse not to sit in the assembly of * mockers; precepts I am sure we have frequent, *Pro.* 4. not to walk in the way with them, and *Ioh.* 3. not to bid such, God speed. * Ier.15.17. and Psal.26.5.

Reasons we have many. First, They shall be * ashamed. Secondly, Others shall fear. Yet herein faulty, do we wonder if God send pestilence? * 2 Thes.3.14.

Secondly, what if we say the spiritual contagion our selves carry about us, and have cast upon our brethren occasion it? If not in counsell, and excitement, yet at least by example; 1 *Cor.* 5. *Know you not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?* I beseech you, brethren, think of this, you especially that professe the fear of God; abstain you not onely from evill, but from * appearance of evill; hate you, not the flesh onely, but the * garment spotted of the flesh. * 1 Thes.5.22. * Iud.ver.23.

Thirdly, Ye are called to blessing, 1 *Pet.* 3. 9. Why then are curses of plague, and pestilence, wished upon your cattell, your neighbours, your children, in your fury? Is it pestilence, or plague, we would have? You shall have it, till God hath consumed you from off the earth: these sins break off, and think the leaving of these sinne; God specially now requires of us.

Would you know the positive duties God requires?

quires? even from the quality of the judgement ye may be informed. First, the publike service of God in the Congregation, how generally is it sleighted by the people? any occasion will withdraw from it. There was a Law for the Leper, He must not, till his Leprosie was cleansed, come into the Congregation of Gods people; the same by proportion is justly holden for the Pestilence: I am perswaded God aimed at this, That they that would not when they had health, might not in their greatest Necessity approach to the Comforts that are tendred unto us: Think then the Lord speaks to thee by this judgement, as Saint *Paul* to the *Hebrews*, *Heb.* 10.25. forsake not the gathering together of Saints, for there is God specially, many times extraordinarily present with his Ordinance. Secondly, Christian society of godly neighbours is that the Lord hath ordained for an under means to nourish, and increase Grace in his Children; Lord! how generally is it sleighted? What through Pride, what through Malice, what through Covetousnesse; scorne we the company of Gods people? we may need the help and society of the meanest: And think God by this judgement calls thee to the duty.

Next for the *Modus*, *What shall I render? Isa.* 1. 12. *who hath required these things? Isa.* 58.5. *Is it such a fast that I have chosen?* The things were required, but they failed in the manner. The things I commend unto you in this behalf. First, See to the state and condition of your persons, that you be truely penitent, and as *David*, *regard no wicked-*

* Psal 66.18.

nes

nes in your hearts, for best duties from such are an abomination to the Lord. Secondly, See to this, That there be a concord betwixt thy action, and affection, thy pretence and intention: there is nothing which God more abhorrs then hypocrisie in his service, for it is both contrary to the simplicity of his Nature, and withall argues the basest opinion of God that may be, as if he were a God that saw not the hearts. Thirdly, Let it come cheerfully from thee, whatsoever thou performest to God, 1 *Chron.* 28.9. *non quantum*, but *ex quanto*; not what thou bringest, but with what good affection, and cheare, thou bringest, is accepted; *God loves a cheerefull giver.* 2 *Cor.* 9.7.

What shall I render? The second thing *David* here commends to us in this his Rhetoricall question, is, The nature of a heart truely thankfull: the best it can render, he thinks too base for the Benefactors to whom he renders it, see 1 *Chron.* 29.14.15. First, If we compare what we render with what God conferrs; Heaven for Earth, Deeds for Words, Himself for Nothing, his Sonne for lesse then Nothing. Secondly, If we way how in nothing we obliged him; for who hath given him first? see *Rom.* 11.35. but onely his meere grace and mercy, because he had a favour to us. Thirdly, How ill we deserved at his hands, having sold our Birth-right, as *Esau* for Pottage, so we for an Apple, *Genes.* 3. *Tit.* 3. Fourthly, How weak, and imperfect the purest services are that come from us to him, stained as menstruous Clothes, *Isa.* 64.6.

Prove

Prove it as one maine difference twixt Gods true Children, and Hypocrites in the Church. *Cain* for forme brings an offering as doth *Abel*, *Gen.* 4. but God had respect to *Abel's*, not to *Cain's*; *Cain* brings at adventure, any thing he thought would serve his turne: *Abel* brings of the first fruits, and the fat of the flock, *Mal.* 1. The Table of the Lord is not to be regarded, Halt or Blinde, so it were a sacrifice, all was well, &c.

Who can in this kinde excuse himself? The prime, and vigour of our life how have we spent upon the service of Satan? our best wits how have we tyred and wasted in vanity? The Refuse that age hath left us how hardly affoord we to our God? The Attention we yeeld unto Gods Word, is it comparable to that we yeeld to a Judge, or a Justices charge? The Threats of our God, do we so tremble at as at the Threats of Men? The kindnesse of God do we so value as the favour of Men? we do not, such is our sensuality, such our more love of men, of our selves, then of our God, who yet hath done so great things for us!

The better to enlarge our hearts to this duty; let us consider, First, That God hath bestowed on us the choice, and prime of his favors in all kinds; As we are men, Reason; As his Church, his Word; his Word not onely purely, but plentifully preached; Yea, his Spirit, his Sonne, Himself: Thus hath he magnified his kindnesse to us; Wretched men that we are! can we think our best Devotions too good for such a God?

Secondly,

Secondly, Compare our selves with other Churches; He hath given us Peace, while they are turmoyled in the tumults of Warre; Victory, when they have been subjected to many Foyles; Security and Safety, while they dayly carry their lives in their hands; Liberty to serve him, while they many in corners are forced to steal their Devotions: Thus hath God magnified his Mercy to us, and yet. &c.

Thirdly, Compare our selves with our Brethren in our own Church, and Kingdome, we shall see God hath vouchsafed us our preheminence. It is well towards Thirty yeeres that you have had here the word of God purely, and sincerely taught you; there be neighbouring Congregations, that since the dayes of Superstition never yet enjoyed the blessing to have a preaching ministry setled amongst them; If we speak to the Blessing in hand, Them God hath delivered over, us he hath preserved.

Fourthly, Compare our selves with our Brethren and Neighbours living all under the same means of Salvation; How many see you still living and dying in grosse ignorance of God, in wilfull Rebellion and Disobedience? And yet there be those again that may say, God hath blessed the means of grace to them, their eyes are enlightned to see, their hearts affected to love, and obey his Truth. Surely if such men can satisfie themselves with an ordinary measure of duty, I shall wonder.

Verse. XIII.

I will take the Cup of Salvation: and call upon the Lord.

AN answer to the demand: *Poculum Salutis*, The Cup of Salvation; You may not think this to be our Drunkards Health; God never warrants either drunkennesse, or drinkings with excesse of riot to any, 1 *Pet.* 4. 3. and yet I am perswaded that profane Custome hath originally grounded it self from hence: St *Ambrose*, in his time, speaks of some Custome they had to drink *Pro Salute Imperatorum*; but well converts it to *Oramus pro Salute Imperatorum*: The God we serve is not the Idoll *Bacchus*, to be propitiated with drinking, or drunkennesse; It is devotion and obedience that pleaseth him.

I could fill you with Expositions, but *Quorsum?* This understand; The Jewish Church had three kinde of sacrifices. First, Holocausts; wherein the whole was offered by fire unto the Lord, neither Priests, nor people partaking in them. Secondly, Sinne-offerings, and Trespasse offerings, wherein part was burnt unto God, the residue was the Priests portion; Marry the Sinner or trespasser partook in it. Thirdly, They had Peace-offerings, *Levit.* 7. 11. which were offered in liew of deliverance, and safety from God; Whose Rite was this, That thereof part should be offered to God, part accrued to the Priests; the

the residue to the Offerer, and those whom he invited to partake in the Feast: Examples hereof, see 1 *Sam.* 16. 3. *Prov.* 7. 14. and, which is most to purpose, because I think we have thereof what was done according to the promise here; It is said of *David*, *He offered Burnt-offerings, and Peace-offerings unto the Lord*, 1 *Chron.* 16. 1.

What is this to *Poculum Salutis*, The Cup of Salvation in my Text?

Answ. The Cup of Salvation, is, by a *Synechdoche*, as much as *Sacrificium salutis*, that is as much as to say, A Sacrifice, or Banquet, made for the people in respect of safety, and deliverance vouchsafed unto *David*: read diligently the story, 1 *Chron.* 16.

Now if ye ask me the Reason of the Institution, Why the people of the Jews must thus upon their deliverances offer such Peace-offerings, and with a Banquet liberally eating and drinking before the Lord?

Answ. First, One reason seems this; namely, To stirre up the Offerers themselves with more chearfulnesse, and alacrity to praise God for his mercies. Secondly, If ye respect others, it was to teach what should be the affection of all Gods people; that is, as Saint *Paul*, To draw others to joyn with us in our praising God. Thirdly, If ye respect the lavish multitude, I am perswaded it was one end, that if by nought else, yet by the belly they might be drawn to know, and glorifie the Name of God. From which ceremonious Ordinance, grounded upon these foundations, some-

2 Cor. 1. 6.

ſomething might be obſerved, which toucheth us: ye have been taught, that though ordinances of Jews binds us not in their ſuperficies, or according to the Letter, yet they binde according to their Morall Intelligence; as for example, though we be not bound to abſtain from Swines-fleſh, yet we are taught by the Ceremony to abſtain from Luxury, which that Ceremoniall Obſervation led unto; So though we be not bound to our Sacrifices of Goats, and Bulls, no not in Thank-offerings; yet to the Morall Intelligence we are bound: As this; Firſt, To ſtirre up our ſelves by all holy outward means to praiſe God with alacrity, and chearfulneſſe of heart for the favours he hath vouchſafed us; and that I am ſure is a duty, I mean not onely to praiſe God, but to uſe all good means to excite our ſelves with chearfulneſſe to praiſe his Name, ſee *Pſal.* 103. *Iſa.* 38.

This is that which the Rule interpreting the Commandments leads us unto; that is, Where a duty is preſcribed, there all holy means leading to the duty are preſcribed: as thus, To ſpeak *Ad cor noſtrum*, where it is commanded to provide for families, all holy means conducing thereto are preſcribed; becauſe the duty without it cannot be acquired, frugality therefore is required; ſo where drunkenneſſe is forbidden, company with drunkards is forbidden; where chaſtity is commanded, abſtinence from laſcivious company is commanded; where giving to them that need, there labour is enjoyned, *Eph.* 4. 28, *&c.*

We

We seem to love good duties, yet to be out of the love of the means; fain we would go to heaven, but we are loath to be sent thither by preaching; yet * by it we must thither: Fain we would have preaching, but we are loath to afford the Minister his maintenance, it must be ere ye have it as ye should have it: Fain we would have assurance of salvation, but we are loath to mortifie the flesh; seemingly we fain to mortifie the flesh, yet we are loath to pinch the belly or the back, &c. *Vse.* * 1 Cor. 1. 21.

What God hath joyned together, let no man put asunder; God never meant to bestow heaven on us, or any thing leading thereto, but by means; I mean for that which is ordinary.

I beseech you, let these Reasons sway you. First, God never accounts that man willing to be saved, or to do any thing available to salvation, that refuseth the means he affords to salvation; *Matth.* 23. 37. *I would have gathered you, you would not*; Would not? who would not be gathered to God? But in as much as they refused the means, therefore, saith our Saviour, they would not.

Secondly, The means we chuse may prove no means, but impediments; when God appoints the end, himself will make the choice of the means; but for gathering, and strengthening his Church, he hath ordained Word and Sacraments, will we be saved without these means, we shall never be saved.

Thirdly, Why do we not consider the means may be taken from us? I know no Kingdome or

Church in the world to which they are entailed: The Church of the Jews, those of *Asia* were Churches, as we are; so was that of the *Palatinate*. yet now we see what is their Fate: Though God will ever have a Church upon the earth, yet hath he no where promised to have a Church in *England*, see *Am.* 8. 11.

Fourthly, Suppose the means stay with us; yet, First, Upon our contempt they may be * cursed to us, (that though we hear, we shall not understand) and become occasions of our farther blindnesse, and hardening. Secondly, We may be taken from them, by sicknesse, prisonment, banishment, death; and then what becomes of our poor souls? I mean still, where we have carried our selves contemptuously toward the means: This then I would advise, use the means which God hath prescribed.

* Isa. 6. 10.

Now whereas *David* according to Gods ordinance, draws others to joyn with him in praising God, we observe our duty, and that is not to content our selves onely to do religious duties, but to draw others to fellowship in them; so did *Andrew* and *Philip*, *Ioh.* 1. 46. so it was prophesied of the last times, *Zech.* 8. *Isa.* 2. but our times live to confute prophesies.

We have these Reasons. First, Our reward is greater, *Dan.* 12. such shine as Starres.

Secondly, They may supply our defects; all having not like faith, nor like fervency, nor like disposition to receive; joyn all together we may perhaps make a complete sacrifice.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Compassion, me thinks, should move us, *Ind.* 23. It is likely they that praise God for us, would more praise him for themselves.

Taxed here are. First, Negligents in this duty, who though for their own persons they be carefull, yet for others are regardlesse; * *Abrahams* commendation was, he would charge servants and children after him; His sonnes we are, if we walk in his steps. * Gen.18.19.

Secondly, Hinderers of the duty. First, Positively, Doing what deterres from religion; for whom, I may say, is reserved the blacknesse of darknesse for ever, whether it be by counsell, or threatening, or punishment. Oh that such would consider what Saint *Paul* speaks, * *Destroy not thou thy brother for meat, for whom Christ died*; What doest thou but as much as in thee lies, hinder the intention of our Mediatour? * Rom.14.

What should I say for example? though this I know, the exemplary sinner is the most grievous of all sinners; To him not onely his personall sinnes, but those which have been by his example, shall be imputed. And what say you to toleration of evill? 1 *Cor.* 5. if it be but connivence at omissions, certainly it suits not with that should be in Christians.

I beseech you hither let us bend our selves. First, We see Adversaries, Atheists, Papists, all drawing to their practise, Shall not we be as zealous for our God, as they are for the Devill?

Secondly, We see the Devill himself bestirring himself, because his time is * short; and how * Apoc.12.12.

short

ſhort our time is, who knows? once this we know, he that * winneth ſouls is wiſe; and he that converts another to righteouſneſſe, ſhall * ſave a ſoul, and cover a multitude of ſinnes.

* Pro.11.30.

* Iam.5.20.

Thirdly, If we ſhame to learn of carnall men, or of the Devill, let us learn of God, and conſider the end why he gives us gifts, not for our own benefit onely, 1 *Cor.*12.7. but for the benefit and profit of others, ſee *Luke* 22.32. *When thou art converted, ſtrengthen thy brethren.*

Next conſiderable, are the means *David* chuſeth to draw the people to fellowſhip in his thankſgiving; It is by a Banquet: Me thinks he would teach us to draw any other with our ſelves, whatſoever he be, though it be by the belly, to glorifie the Name of God; and I aſſure you, I am of his minde, and dare avouch it pleaſing to God: if Saint *Paul* could ſay, when Chriſt was * preached, whether by pretenſe, or in ſincerity, I know not; but that we may ſay, ſo God be pleaſed, whether for a little countrey, or a great one: and if I be not deceived, this is the reaſon Saint *Paul* urgeth on us to do good to all, *Gal.* 6. 10. and our * Saviour, *Let men ſee our good works*, that if nothing elſe, yet the taſte of our table-chear may draw them to God; ſurely, me thinks, whether by the belly, or by the back, we draw them to God, ſo they be drawn, it is not materiall; God drew the Magicians of *Perſia* by a * ſtarre, fitting the means to their humour: Chriſt his Diſciples fiſhers, by promiſing a fiſhing of better value; and if we keep our ſelves to the humour

* Phil.1.18.

* Matth.5.16.

* Matth.2.2.

humour of the people, while the means are good, and the intention honest, what harm is it? our Saviour fits parables to this end.

I shall seem a fool in speaking my minde, yet I assure you I speak Gods truth, and no man can on sound ground contradict me: These outward curtesies that are common, and publique, I should advise Gods people to shew as much, if not more, to Aliens, then to those who professe themselves Gods people.

My Reasons are. First, The slighting of them occasions blasphemy of the holy Name of God, as if we preached no Doctrine of humanity; understand relieving of naturall necessities, is a work of humanity, not onely of Christian duty.

Secondly, Respect to them occasions their liking of our Religion, the Faith that we professe, so that without the Word, they are wonne by our *conversation: Understand, This is a naturall notice, *Deus est beneficus, & bonus creaturis*; out of which Principle, Heathens can judge whether our Religion be of God, for true Religion fashions to the Nature of the God we serve.

*1 Pet. 3. 1.

We love (I know not how) enclosures of our favours to them, who are actually the sonnes of God; Saint *Paul* allows them to be prefer'd, but (if I mistake not) he means in private, not in publique, or common, *Gal.* 6. 10. I am sure our God we serve, loads with his * temporall blessings the worst men, and I know not how we can erre in imitating him.

*Matth. 5. 45.

Verse XIV.

I will pay my Vowes unto the Lord: now in the presence of all his people.

A Second Branch of Resolution; *I will pay my vows.*

Wherein are three things observable.

First, The Act.

Secondly, The Matter.

Thirdly, The Circumstances.

What is a Vow? Generally, a solemn promise made unto God, with intention of obliging our selves to performance.

There is, First, *Propositum*; Settled and firm purpose of heart, 1 *Cor.* 7. 37. which place Papists ill traduce to a vow; for though a vow presuppose such purpose, yet doth not purpose make up the whole nature of a vow.

* Act. 11. 23. & 1 Cor. 7. 37.

Secondly, *Promissum*, a promise, which adds to *Propositum*, obligation of the Promiser; and may be either to men, or God; when it is made to man, truth is violated, if performance follow not; when to God, not truth onely, but piety is violated; Religion binding to performance; and of this nature is *Votum*.

Thirdly, *Iuramentum*, when to the promise an oath is added for confirmation, the Promiser obliging himself to God under the penalty of a losse to performance; now whether the thing promised be intended to men, or God, the oath binds.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, There is *Votum*; wherein is a promise, and that made to God; for vowes and prayers have all the same *Objectum cui*, because they are both *Actus Religionis*: so differs it from a promise generally taken, which may be made to men; To which if you adde the other two. First, Solemnity. Secondly, And intention to binde our selves to performance, ye have the full and perfect nature of a vow.

Kindes are diversly distinguished. First, By their matter, some are *Moraliter Pia*, as when the duties are Morally prescribed, precepted, here the vow increaseth the obligation; examples we have, *Gen.* 28. *The Lord shall be my God*, see also, *Psal.* 119. and *Psal.* 56. 12. *Thy vows are upon me, O God; I will render praises unto thee.*

If any ask to what use such vows served?

Answ. They are vertuous preventions of inconstancie in morall duties.

Secondly, Monitours, and excitements to more carefull observation: Thus it fares with us often; our necessity, or perill, oft wrings from us purpose and promises of more strict obedience; the storm over-blown, we are oft forgetfull of duty; as Pharaoh, as *Israel*; the pious meditation of a sound obligation by voluntary vow laid upon our selves, layes on us a necessity of performance; whiles we think, every omission of duty becomes a double sinne unto us. First, By breach of precept. Secondly, Of Vow.

Secondly, There are vows, *Moraliter Impia*; such that of those good fellows, *Act.* 23. who

bound themselves by a vow, by a cursing to eat nothing, till they had slain *Paul*; such frequent amongst Papists, confirmed not onely by oathes, but with the solemnest receiving of the Sacrament, to murder Princes, &c. In which performances is double sinne. First, *Factum impium*, A wicked fact done. Secondly, Abuse of so solemn an Act of Piety, to Impiety.

Thirdly, In the old Testament were another sort of vows; of duties ceremoniall, as of Peace-offerings, Thanks-offerings, of the severall things they enjoyed, *Levit.* 27. which the people, either in perills, or otherwise of voluntary devotion, vowed unto God; see *Psal.* 132. with these in the New Testament we have nothing to do.

Fourthly, Yet something we have a little answerable thereto, which may lawfully, and conveniently become matter of our vows; such, I mean, as are made *De Diaphoris*, or of circūstances in things that are *De genere bonorum*; as to give *Calvins* instance; Suppose a man should observe himself troubled with vain pride in using costly, or curious apparell; and to prevent this vanity, should by vow binde himself to abstain from such attire; or if by the use of some delicious diet, he should finde himself infested with motions of luxury, *Nihilo satius fecerit*, then by vow to binde himself to abstinence; and to put this knife to his throat, as *Solomons* phrase is, if he be a man given to appetite.

Like is to be thought of the vow of alms, or con-

consecrations to be made to maintenance of works of piety, or charity, though no necessity to vow, yet lawfull, and in some respect obligatory, and binding.

Other distinctions of vowes there are many amongst Divines.

First, Absolute, made peremptorily without any condition, expresse, or tacite; an example whereof see, *Psal.* 101.

Secondly, Conditionate, which binde onely upon supposition.

Thirdly, Temporary vows, wherein a man bindes himself for a time, or times, to fasting, alms, devotion, in this or that measure to be performed.

Fourthly, Perpetuall, where a man bindes himself for perpetuity; as *Rechabites* to drink no wine, nor plant vineyards.

Is it lawfull in state of New Testament to make vows?

Answ. Some Divines have made it questionable: The more judicious, ancienter, and later, otherwise judge, with whom I consent. First, It is that to which there is a naturall instinct, and that universall, as to pray, give thanks, &c. Secondly, Uses of it under New Testament, as gratitude, firmer obligation to morall duties, prevention of exorbitances.

Cautionate yet we must be a *ll* in entring such an obligation: And thus generally are the Rules given. First, That the thing moved implie neither impiety, or injustice, nor uncharitablenesse.

Reasons are, First, Because to Piety, Justice, and Charity Gods law peremptorily bindes under the pain of eternall damnation. Secondly, Because this crosseth the maine end of a Vow, which is to obliege our selves more strictly to serve God according to all his Commandements: I spare mention of the horrible, and hellish vows of the Papists, &c.

I have heard, and taken some such from our people, that conceiving dislike of the Minister, have vowed never more to hear him: Impious wretch! Wilt thou therefore neglect, and contemne the Word of God, because thou distastest the person of the Minister? What a poor vengeance is this? And on whom falls it, but upon thine own soul? Thou art angry at the Minister, therefore thou wilt put from thee thine own salvation, *Act.* 13.

Such that of many mercilesse, and hard-hearted *Nabals*, who to save their Penny, their Crums; by vow binde themselves never to lend, never to give, *Deut.* 15. thoughts of *Belial*, saith *Moses*: How dwells the love of the Father in you? how observe you the precept, *Do good to all?* *Gal.* 6. 10. how observe you the end of Gods larger distribution? Ye are *Stewards.

Luke 12. 42.

But sure this goes to the heart; That in our selfwill, we either vow, or set purpose to restrain our selves from duties of Charity to which by instinct of Nature we stand ever obliged, especially to the children of our own loynes: Let them grow, though in fervour of youth, to notorious exorbitancy,

tancy, we have vowed, it seems, never more to admit them to society, conversation, no not sight, or conference: Have we vowed? That vow is impious; Have we but purposed? That purpose is impious, uncharitable, unnaturall; for shame, for sinne alter it. First, Doth not Religion, Charity, Nature, teach a Parent to seek the salvation of the Child? yea, though exorbitant, and disobedient: How long bindes this Precept? *Bring them up in discipline, and information of the Lord. Ephes.* 6. How long art thou bound Personally to apply Counsells, Admonitions, Comforts, Encouragements? saith *Solomon*, so long as there is Hope, and that is as long as there is Life: Are we bound to it towards Neighbours? And not much more to Children? for sinne and shame amend it. Secondly, Hath God given them seeds of Grace? Oh for sinne and pity water them; let them not by thy default die; discourage them not, *Collos.* 3. Thirdly, But hath he given them repentance to come out of the snare of the Devill? How do Angels joy in them? how should all Christians rejoyce in it? most of all, Parents, *Luk.* 15. What grief like this? To think I am father of a Castaway, specially when Conscience suggests, I have faulted in duty, see 2. *Sam.* 18. 33.

O *Monica*, *Monica*, Saint *Austins* mother, How did she sue him with Prayers, Tears, Vows to God? how did she follow him from Countrey to Countrey, though a *Manachee*, a Fornicatour, as his own confession is, till she had procured from God his conversion? And what a worthy Instrument

ment of Gods glory proved he? Certainely it is true, scarce any have proved more excellent Instruments of Gods glory, then such as have been most exorbitant; witnesse Saint *Paul*. And I beseech you take heed, when God begins to shew mercy, be not you unmercifull, uncharitable, unnaturall.

Secondly, That they be of things within compasse of our Ability, if not naturall, yet gracious: Reasons are; First, To vow an impossibility, what is it but to tempt God? Secondly, To entangle our selves in a snare. And thence is the exception our Divines justly take against the vows of Chastity in single life, which they impose on all that enter state of Religion; especially upon their Priests. Their evasions are, That they binde no man simply to enter such Vow?

Answ. Not simply, upon an Hypothesis; that is, if he will be a Priest, and in that office serve God, that Vow he must enter; be he never so well gifted for the work, be Characters of his gifts never so great, though God call him without imposing such Vow, yet he must Vow, or not enter. Secondly, That it is possible by Grace, though not by Nature; as chastity in marriage, and other sanctity?

Answ. But the *quære* is, Whether by Grace common, or by Grace speciall, and proper, or, as they call it, Priveleged? Saint *Paul* saith it is a proper gift, 1 *Cor.* 7. our Saviour, *non datur omnibus.* Secondly, They must shew that God hath given promise, they shall receive if they seek it; as he hath for graces of Christianity, *Ezek.* 36.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, That to any one person that for the time hath the privelege, God will continue it for perpetuity. *Quid multa?* How fearfull have the fruits been of such interdicts? What are their Priests? their Covents of Monks, and Nunnes, many of them, other then Stews?

And here by the way let me minde, and monish you, that you be not over-ventrous in binding your selves by vow to measures of gracious performances, though in Christian duties, beyond assurance of ability in the promise, or something equivalent from God: Suppose a man should by vow binde himself never to doubt of the promise of God; never to admit wandring thought in his prayer, or hearing, &c. The vow were rash, and may prove a snare to the conscience. For first, Where hast thou promise, God will give such a πληροφορία, as to *Abraham*? Secondly, Where hast thou promise, thou shalt never conflict with doubting? never have thy attention disturbed with wandering imaginations? The main of the graces for their substance God hath promised; the measure, and degrees, he hath kept in his own power to dispose more liberally, or otherwise, as he shall see expedient for every mans salvation.

The third caution respects the intention, and minde of the vower, which varies the case so far in vows, that it makes them, and the offers therein vowed, either pleasing, or abominable in Gods sight; though perhaps the matter it self be possible and lawfull: as for example, to vow as *Re-*

chabites, abstinence from wine, or strong drink, is not simply unlawfull; to vow abstinence from such, or such a meat, &c. not simply unlawfull; for they are ἀδιάφορα, things left to liberty to be taken, or refused; and so thou mayest carry thy self in such vows that thy abstinence shall please God; Is this that thou aimest at, that thou mayest prevent luxury, and intemperance? Thy vow is warrantable, thy performance acceptable: But doest thou think as Papists, that this abstinence is warrantably a part of the worship of God? Thou sinnest in thy vow: For first, God hath no where prescribed this as part of his worship. Secondly, And that minde, or intention, brought to such things vowed, and their performance makes thee culpable of will-worship, and voluntary Religion. Put it in a matter that is prescribed of God as part of his worship; suppose in prayer; though thou vowest to binde thy self to such a form, to such a number, to so many times in the day, to such a place, perhaps to thy closet, or to the Temple, Though to pray be a worship of God, though to pray in such a form, or time or place, be not unlawfull; yet to think, that using such a form, such a number, in such place, or time, is a worship of God, as it is done so, what is it but will-worship, and voluntary Religion? Lastly, Particularizing in the matter of the vow, best suits with prudence. Reason is. First, Because generalities are more subject to errour, as being liable to restraints, exceptions, &c. Secondly, Particulars are best discussed, &c.

Follows

Follows now the second particular in this Text, the Act, or office it self, Payment, or Performance; *I will pay my vows.*

But what if *David* performed? Follows it that we must pay our vows?

Answ. This must be considered,; the prime Rule of our Actions, is Precept, not Example; Though Saints, and Angels, should practise contrary to precept, their practice might not be warrant to us; for *Mic.* 6. 8. *Rom.* 12. 2. Secondly, There is *Typus* and *Archetypus*. Paterns, are Saints and Angels; Archetypes are God, and his Christ; *Eph.* 5. 1. Be ye followers of God as children; Learn of me, *Mat.* 11. 29. see 1 *Cor.* 11. 1.

The world runnes astray by means of example; Give leave therefore a little to enquire, How far Inferences of Doctrine, may be made from example? *Manichees* of old gave this Rule; That where were records of Saints practices, without speciall note of Reproofe, there the example either bound, or warranted: But *Contra*; for what if the generall Law were against it? though no particular reprehension; the generall shews, we are not bound, nor warranted to resemble; for example, when we read of Patriarks Poligamie, we reade not of particular reproof; yet have we a generall, *Mal.* 2. 15. God made one, because he sought a holy seed; and, *Non fuit sic ab initio:* We read of *Sampsons* murdering himself in taking vengeance on Philistims, yet may not inferre, it is warrantable for us so to do; though particular reproof be none, yet the gene-

rall is Rule sufficient; *Non occides*, Thou shalt not kill, another, much lesse thy self, For he that kills himself, kills a man, and by consequent is *Homicida*, as Saint *Austin* speaks.

Better directions are these. First, What Saints did as Saints, that is, by vertue, and instruction of common grace, therein may a generall Law be made; Why? Because therein we are all partakers; and for such actions we have a generall Law; *Iobs* patience, *Iam.* 5. *Abrahams* obedience, &c. We may imitate, for these things they did as Saints, as Christians, &c. Secondly, Some things they did by vertue of their speciall calling, Ministers preached, Magistrates punished with death, made war against common enemies: The Rule is here, Inference can none be made, but for men of like calling; Not therefore every man preach.

Thirdly, In Acts of calling there are different circumstances, and degrees; saith Saint * *Peter*, There are supreme, there are inferiour Magistrates; not what the supreme Magistrate did, that may every man do that is in Magistracie, for some things are peculiar to them as Superiours; Amongst Ministers, all are not of one rank; There are * Apostles, Evangelists, Pastours; Not every thing that an Apostle did, is warrantable for every Pastour: For example, When the Rulers of the people inhibit *Peter*, and *Iohn*, to preach in the Name of Jesus, notwithstanding they * preached; That is no warrant for us, for this was eminent in their calling, that they had it immediately from Christ,

* 1 Pet. 2. 13, 14.

* Eph. 4. 11, 12.

* Act. 5. 29.

Christ, the great King, and Bishop of our souls, wherefore could not be countermanded by man; we have ours by men, therefore according as men tolerate, or inhibit, so must we exercise, or forbear; Herein holds the Rule, *Ejus est tollere, cujus est ponere.*

Fourthly, Some things they did warrantably out of extraordinary instinct, as *Phineas, Num.* 25. as *Elias*, 2 *Kings* 1. *confer Luke* 9. These not warrantable to us, except we are sure of like instinct, and inspiration.

In short; For the matter of example, and bond, or warrant from them for the like; These two principall Rules remember.

First, Are they congruent to the Archetype, the chief Patern, God and his Christ, in things that are capable of imitation; therein be bold to imitate: For example, God doth good to good and bad, *Matth.* 5. 45. So do thou to enemies: God pardons great sinners repenting, *Eph.* 4. 32. as dear children herein imitate: God is provoked every day, and yet loads us daily with his benefits; so *Luke* 17. *If seventy times seven times they return, Forgive.*

The second Rule is this; Is the duty, or vertue, or action commanded, or warranted in the Law generall? Therein imitate Saints; Thou sinnest by bare omission, thou sinnest more, if thou neglect excitement by their example; The Rule is Precept; Example is the excitement.

To the question now; Thus is the answer easie: Bindes it us? Yes, and the rather for the example;

David payed what he vowed, *Ergo*, we must pay what we vow. Reason is; First, So is the generall Precept, *Vovete, & reddite Deo, Psal.* 76. 11. see *Deut.* 23. 21, 22. and *Eccles.* 5. 6. where are three severall reasons to urge it.

Admits the Precept no Dispensation?

Answ. Many things Popish Scholemen, and Canonists talk of dispensing with thus; and cases they put many: Hold it for a Rule; First, What thou hast regularly vowed to God, no man can discharge thee from performance of; for by it God makes interest, and title to whatsoever thou hast vowed, and who shall deprive him of his title? Secondly, Gods Law is this; * *Vovete, & reddite*; Can man dispense with the Law of God?

* Psal. 76. 11. & Deut. 23. 21.

Howbeit there are dispensations, or something equivalent, which providence sometimes casts upon us; and which we may interpret as Divine dispensations: For example, I would suppose a man in his extremity of perill, or sicknesse, to vow restitution of what he had fraudulently gotten from other men; perhaps at the time of the vowing, ability is sufficient; and event may come, by fire, or ship-wrack, that he is suddenly disabled to perform what he had vowed: though in this case, it is meant; First, The honest purpose should be continued whensoever God should give ability, and make able. Secondly, Though a new increasing for that crosse accident presently ensue not; yet whilest the purpose is continued, though the act be not at large performed; howbeit pardon,

we

we must think God in this Case dispenseth.

Herein alas! Which of us must not be forced to say, *Miserere*, Lord be mercifull unto me in this, That in our vows we are behinde with our God.

There is in our Baptisme a solemn vow made, to renounce the Devill, and all his works, to beleeve in God, and to obey him according to all his Commandments: I dispute not the question now. First, Either, whether it be a vow properly. Secondly, Or whether it be the vow of the sureties, or of parents, children be bound: once this I am sure of; Baptisme is the entrance of our covenant with God, wherein as God bindes himself, under his hand and seal, to give us remission of sinnes, and life everlasting; so we, by the very fact, covenant, and are bound to new obedience: And if not the sureties, yet the parents are bound to, *Quantum in se*, that these things be performed by their children.

And yet who may not remember, how his infancie, yea nonage much hath been led in vanity, disobedience, and how the Spirit of the air hath ruled in him? It is enough, that we have violated the Precept, it should go near our hearts, that we have withall violated that solemn vow made to God in our Baptisme.

Secondly, If that may seem excusable, because not so personally made, and entered in daye of our nonage, what say we to the renewing of our vow, and covenant, at the Sacrament of the Lords Supper? What time we thither present

our

our selves, we are, or should be men of discretion, Masters of our own actions; that we daily offer up bodies, and souls, and lives, all corruptions to be mortified, all that the faculties of soul and body will stretch unto, to be employed to the service, and glory of God: And yet when see we in one of a thousand, care to perform what we so oft have undertaken, and vowed to our God.

Fools as we are; If God make not good all that he hath promised, for spiritualls, or temporalls, we are ready to quarrell, and grumble at him, and to question his fidelity; who promising so largely, performs so faintly: Whereas truth is. First, God never promised absolutely, but upon condition of our obedience. Secondly, Hath performed more then his promise, keeping touch with us, even when we deal perfidiously in his Covenant. Thirdly, And our own hearts examined, will tell us we have failed in our Restipulation: What if we perish as our brethren, by plagüe, pestilence, famine, sword, is God unrighteous, or unfaithfull, that takes vengeance? We rather, who have dealt so treacherously in our covenant, seriously think of it, and now we are again to renew our ancient vow so often iterated, at least bethink we our selves of our Restipulation.

What should I speak of those other particular vows, speciall perills have extorted from us, in sicknesse, in other dangers? yet the storm overblown, how have we returned as the dog to his vomit?

The issues of men thus perfidiously dealing with

God, ye may observe to be these. First, God is made more inexorable in our greatest Necessities, and then begins to laugh at our destruction, and mock when our fear cometh, *Prov.* 1. that though we make many prayers, yet then he hears not; *Isa.* 1.

Secondly, Commonly worse, and greater calamities befall us, as *Iob* 5.14. *Psal.* 16. There being nothing, wherewith God is more provoked then by being deluded. Thirdly, else our hearts more flinty, and obdurate in evill, so that we grow desperate in contempt, and careless neglect of making our peace with our God; make but your observation, and tell me, if you finde it not true, that our Saviour hath, *Matth.* 12. The Devill returning, after casting out by vow, and promise, and purpose, brings with him more, and worse then himself.

The circumstance of the time, Now, might not impertinently be handled; see *Eccles.* 5. *Deut.* 23.

I touch upon it onely: Amongst the circumstances of our negligence, let not this be forgotten; That whereas the vow bindes us from infancie, we have scarce in old age performed our Restipulation; and this account make, thy account to God will be from thy very Baptisme.

The third thing I rather chuse to insist on, is on those words; *In the presence of all his people*; confer *Vers.* 18, 19.

Why doth *David* chuse publique performance of his vows? Perhaps they were privately made, and I am perswaded it is true, there were many

more witnesses of the performance, then was of the making; was he vain-glorious?

Answ. Not; vain-glory is when either by vain means which deserve not praise, or when by good duties in themselves praise-worthy, men seek the praise of men, more then the glory of God, *Ioh.* 12. 43. otherwise, by holy means to seek good name amongst men, with intentionall reference to the glory of God, is not to be vain-glorious, see *Phil.*4.7.

What then moved him to make this choice? First, The good of men. Secondly, The glory of God. It is warrantable for a childe of God, to chuse the publique performance of his devotions, or other morality, and to preferre it in his choice to the private: our Saviour said not in vain, Let your light shine before men, and let them see your good works, *Matth.* 5. 16. Nor Saint *Paul*, Shine as lights in the world, *Phil.*2.15. *Tit.* 3. 8, 14. to maintain or go before in good works; Nor Saint *Iames chap.* 2. Shew me thy faith by thy works.

The Reasons are of it. First, Our own fame, *Phil.* 4. 7. *Rom.* 12. 17. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

Secondly, The adorning of the Gospel; Therefore shew all good fidelity, *Tit.* 3. 10. To be faithfull sufficeth thee perhaps for thy conscience, but it sufficeth not for the adorning of the Gospel; for as good not done, as not known done for that end.

Thirdly, For winning of Aliens, at least by way

way of preparation, see 1 *Pet.* 2. 13. and 3. 2, 16.

Fourthly, For excitement by example, 1 *Tim.* 4. 12. neither is that true of Ministers onely, but of the people; whose duty is also to be examples to the Churches of God, 2 *Cor.* 9. 2.

Fifty, For stopping the mouthes of them, that are ready to blaspheme, 1 *Pet.* 3. 16.

We are grown horribly wilde, and wanton in playing with Scriptures, and inferring from them, since God hath restored us liberty to acquaint our selves with the Letter; I am perswaded God will one day plague it in us: For example, Because our Saviour said, *Mat.* 6. *When thou prayest, enter the Closet*, the inference is, Therefore no man may use his Private Devotions in a Publike place; Absurd! I dare say, our Saviour never meant it, except S. *Paul* contradict our Saviour, 1 *Tim.* 2. 8. *Pray in all places*; and *Hannah* her instance warrants the same, 1 *Sam.* 1. 13. Secondly, May we give an Alms in a Market-place? I doubt not we may, and even affect, in Case, mens beholding of our Charity; though our Saviour said, *Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth*. *Matth.* 6. 3.

For your better information; First, It was never our Saviours intention to inhibite all publique performance of any personall duty, for see *Matth.* 5. 16. He would never then have said, *Let them see your good works*: see the place *Matth.* 6. 5. First, *Actus*. Secondly, *Habitus*. Thirdly, *Gestus*. Fourthly, *Locus*. Fifthly *Finis*, Thus conceive, when the praise, and notice of Men is made utmost end of our Devotion, and Charity, that is forbid-

den, when we ſeek it as our reward, *ver.* 2. Underſtand therefore that theſe are to be underſtood Comparatively; Rather Secret wholly thy Devotion, thy Charity, then make mens applauſe the utmoſt intention, as *Matth.* 5.29,40,41. Thinks any man, but a ſcoffing *Iulian*, that he is bound to the Letter ſimply, or onely comparatively? So true; ſo here, if we could be informed.

I would I might perſwade you, to be thus wiſe in your choiſe of Times, and Places, ſo to do your good works that men may ſee them; let their loynes bleſſe you.

I know not how we pretend ſuch declining of Vain-glory that we neglect the glory of God; and we are ſo loath to do our devotions, and good duties in the ſight of men, that we chuſe rather to omit what is convenient in Devotion, and Charity. If ever there were Times for Publication Practicall, now are the dayes; We have been long branded for *Solifidians*; and now, it ſeems, The Two Religions are come upon the ſtage, contending which is Truer: Saint *Iames* his rule is this, *Pure Religion is to viſit the fatherleſſe and widows, Iam.* 1.27. And you be not ignorant, that by theſe outward fruits judgement of Ignorants is moſt inclined.

Verse XV.

Precious in the sight of the Lord: is the death of his Saints.

LOok not any dependance to be here noted: The Text is absolute, and intire in its self, containing matter of new observation.

In which are three things.

First, *Actus.*

Secondly, *Fundamentum.*

Thirdly, *Materia.*

First, *Actus*, Observation, and inference made thereout; For the generall of observation, we treated it, *ad vers.* 5. Marry there onely as it concerned the Nature of God, and verities delivered us concerning it: Here it is rather of something that concerns his children, and Gods regard to them; wherein, if in any thing, our observation should be curious; for that by specialty God is their God, and his favours to them are all *Cum Privilegio:* Some favours indeed are common to his children with the world, as preservation; but herein have Gods own their specialty, 1 *Tim.* 4. 10. Sunne, Moone, Starres, their light, and influences he hath made to serve all nations: marry to fight for his people, as *Iudg.* 5. 20. Privelege to *Israel*: The works of God lie open to every mans view, *Psal.* 19. 1. But his word is shewn to *Iacob* onely, his statutes to *Israel*, *Psal.* 147. 20. To his Church visible, and hypocrites therein,

he gives his word, but to them mostly in Parables; *To you it is given to know the mysteries, Matth.* 13. To some is knowledge given of his word, but through their neglect it aggravates their damnation, *Matth* 11. To his children onely it is Gods power to salvation, *Rom.* 1. 16. Herein therefore we should be specially observant. First, That we might see, and comprehend the specialty of love, *Eph.* 3. Secondly, That our hearts might be more excited to thankfulnesse; sith speciall favours require speciall thankfulnesse: Besides, temptations tending to doubtfulnesse do not so oft betide Gods children, either about his Nature in generall, or about common blessings, as about those that are priveleges, and characteristicall; whether God be Almighty, Just, Mercifull, &c. in his own Nature, or whether so in those graces that are convayed to them with a privelege, about Adoption, Regeneration, Perseverance, &c. This part of Prudence let us learn; Trust my experience no more, if you finde it not extraordinary comfortable in the evill day.

In five degrees ye shall finde all favours of God to stand. First, Some common to us with all his creatures. Secondly, Some common with all men. Thirdly, Some common with his visible Church. Fourthly, Some common with all his Children. Fiftly, And there are wherein every of Gods children have something extraordinary. I would have none of Gods favours put over without notice, and observation; specially those that

that are peculiar to his children; least of all those, wherein God hath manifested his mercy towards us above his children, and own dear servants; because for these God expects extraordinary measure of thankfulnesse, and obedience; and the rather would I ye should notice this, because that most moves us in Christian duties, and courses, that we see not some speciall reward twixt him that serveth God, and others; see *Mal.* 3. 14. Speculative knowledge, I confesse, is an excellent gift of God, and necessary to salvation, yet we erre, if we think it sufficient; see *Phil.* 3. 8. There are these evidences whereby you may judge of it in your selves. First, What grace, or mercy, we taste from God, we are propense to shew to others; *Ephes.* 5. 1. In forgivenesse; *Eph.* 4. 32. *humile*, in patience, in communicating what our selves have experimented, 2 *Cor.* 1. 6, *&c.* Secondly, Wonderfull desirous of winning others to like experience of Gods favour, see *Psal.* 34. 8. *Psal.* 66. 16. Thirdly, None more hopefull of others conversion, be their state never so desperate for the present. Therefore is infidelity, or doubting, of generall conclusions in none more tollerable then in Gods Saints. The Reason is, Because they have a furtherance to faith, which others want; to wit, Experience of Gods favour, and speciall love to them.

The *Fundamentum*, or ground of inference is his own experience, as if he had said, Truly I may say it, for in mine experience I have found it, so oft hath he delivered, and rescued me from the

the jaws of death: So pleaseth it God, to give his children speciall experience of generall documents; therefore saith *David*, *Psal.* 34. 8. *Taste, and see:* 1 *Pet.* 2. 3. *Ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious: Phil.* 1. 9. *Knowledge and experience.*

Reasons are. First, To increase their πληροφορία, that though it be true, their faith, rests principally upon Authority of the Divine Revealer, yet confirmation it receives from experience: That the word of God is his power to Salvation, is the document; and though there were nothing else but his Testimony, we should beleeve it; but God makes it so to the experience of his children, that they may be more certainly assured of it in their souls, see 1 *Thes.* 2. 13.

Secondly, There is in it a condescending to humane infirmity; Simple we are all by nature; and are generally inclined to walk by sense rather then by faith, 2 *Cor.* 5. God considereth our mould, *Psal.* 103. and therefore tempers his proceeding to our infirmity, and after a sort humours our nature in the motions of grace. This favour of God let us not passe over, without admiring the riches of Gods bounty to us; *Lord, what is man that thou so regardest him?* The rather, because it is a teaching peculiar to Gods children; that though the generalls of Doctrine touching Gods Nature, and Will, and speciall love to his children, be propounded to all mens mindes in the Church; yet this experimentall teaching, in things that concern life, and godlinesse, is the priveledge of the chosen; *Ioh.* 6. 45. They shall be

be all taught of God, they onely in this manner; no men but Gods Elect have that experience of what God hath made severall to his servants. There are two kindes, or degrees of knowledge; One speculative, the other practicall, or experimentall; The speculative standeth in contemplation; this had *Balaam*, *Numb.* 23. 10. thence grew his passionate wish; *Oh let my soul die the death of the righteous*; The all-sufficiencie of the merits of Christ to salvation, wicked contemplate; so of remission of sins, &c. but the experimentall knowledge of all these is the privelege of his chosen onely.

But note we how from particular experience he inferres a generall Rule; Will it proceed? God tenderly respects the life of *David*, Is he therefore so to all his children? Above in the handling of the fifth Verse, we had an enquiry, How farre generall inferences of duty might be made from particulars; and the last Lords-day, how farre the same might be made from example; Now it is to be enquired, How farre generall Doctrines of favour may be made from particular experiments? Surely, ye shall finde it common in Scriptures, from particular actions of God in patience, or mercy, or power, to inferre generall conclusions, see 2 *Pet.* 2. 9. He saved *Lot*, *Noah*, therefore knows how to deliver his: He had mercy on me repenting, therefore will save all penitent sinners, 1 *Tim.* 1. 16. With Jews receiving Sacraments he was not pleased, 1 *Cor.* 10. 5. therefore, may not Christians presume of

 favour,

favour, becauſe they enjoy the Sacraments; He plagued them for murmuring, for idolatry, fornication, therefore take heed of like ſinnes; *Rom.* 11. 20. He ſpared not naturall branches, therefore not thee, but fear alſo, not being high-minded, thine own cutting off likewiſe.

Cautions here are theſe. Firſt, Be ſure thy concluſion be delivered in the word of God, then ſpare not to inferre according to the latitude thereof; with God there is no reſpect of perſons, A concluſion in the word of God, I perceive it, ſaith Saint *Peter*, *Act.* 10. 34. All penitents ſhall be ſaved, *Ezek.* 18. that's confirmed from Saint *Pauls* experience, 1 *Tim.* 1. 16. Precious is the blood of Saints in Gods ſight, *Pſal.* 72. 14. from experience *David* affirms it: And this Rule well arms us againſt all Enthuſiaſmes, and ſuch like deluſions, wherein Anabaptiſts runne to the ſhipwrack of their ſouls.

Secondly, Diſtinguiſh generall from perſonall priveleges; for ſuch ye ſhall read many in the word of God; *Num.* 12. If there be a Prophet, I will ſpeak to him by dream, or viſion, my ſervant *Moſes* is not ſo; To be inſtructed in all things thou mayeſt expect, but to talk with God face to face, or to be informed, by dream, or viſion, expect not; To the Law, and to the Teſtimony, *Iſa.* 8. And, *Mal.* 2. Prieſts lips ſhall preſerve knowledge.

Thirdly, Where the favour is generall, yet the manner, and mean of convayance may be perſonall: for example, to be fed in famine, is a generall

nerall promise, *Psal.* 37. but to be fed as *Elias*, by a Raven, or as the widow of *Sarephath*, by miraculous multiplying the meal, and oyl, was their personall privelege.

Fourthly, As in the *Modus*, and mean, so in their measure there are that have prerogative in common favours; as in knowledge, *Moses*; in faith, *Abraham*; in patience, *Iob*; in zeal, *David*; in revelations, *Paul*; A measure, except according to the promise of God, who gives to every one severally as he will, 1 *Cor.* 12. 11.

Fiftly, In application of the generall in other mens experiments to thy self, be sure thou bring like qualification; It is true, God had mercy on *Paul* repenting, therefore he will have mercy on all, but repenting, &c. Slight not therefore thine own, or other mens personall experiences, they bring great good unto much confirmation to faith concerning the generalls; in them we are grown methinks too wavering: That is a true Rule, *Gal.* 6. 18. Mercy shall be upon such, as upon the *Israel* of God, yet it is upon such as walk after the right Rule, That's a true Rule, God will provide thee competencie according to thy state, and person, if thou keep his wayes precisely; yet false weights, and false measures we must use; else how shall we live? That God will finde us a hiding place in the day of his wrath, is a true Rule, *Zeph.* 2. 3. most plentifully we have seen it experimented, to *Elias*, *Elisha* the Prophets under *Iezabel*; Why doubt we, Oh we of little faith? and our selves have experimented in many

particular perills, and deliverances, and preservations, and provisions that God hath made for us; And surely, God is rich in mercy to all, *Rom.* 10. 12. and with him is no respect of persons; His dealings are exemplary, *Rom.* 4. 24. 1 *Tim.* 1. 16. so we resemble in behaviour.

Follows now the matter of observation; It is enunciated in one simple proposition, tending to explicate the esteem God holds of the death of Saints, which some interpret of his Saints in death; Rather, of the death of his Saints.

I could cloy you with interpretations, but *Quorsum?* The like phrase of speech we reade, 2 *Kings* 1. 13, 14. *Psal.* 72. 14. Now whether he means their naturall, or violent death inflicted by persecutours, may be *quære'd*; Rather this latter, as *Psal.* 72. 14. *Their blood is precious*; to this circumstances of the Text invite us. First, Rarely doth God give way unto it; for so finde we the word Precious put for Rare, 1 *Sam.* 3. 1. Never but upon speciall cause; And this is that we have doctrinally, *Psal.* 72. 14. He doth redeem their soul from deceit and violence, that neither sword, nor cruelty prevails to overthrow it; *Psal.* 37. 32. Wicked watcheth Righteous, seeketh to slay him, *Vers.* 33. The Lord will not leave him in his hand. Plentifull instances we have in Scriptures, I could begin with *Iacob*, and so hold on to *Eliah*, *Elisha*, the Three Children, *Dan.* 3. Fires action suspended, and *Dan.* 5. Lions mouthes stopped; Besides many extraordinary deli-

deliverances of others in latter times, wherein the wisdome, and power of God, hath strangely shewed it self for their deliverance, and preservation, 2 *Tim.* 4. 18. God delivered Saint *Paul* out of the mouth of the Lion; Saint *Peter* destined to death by *Herod*, miraculously delivered by an Angel, *Act.* 12, *&c.*

Thus understand it. First, While God hath use of their service upon earth, *Ioh.* 11. 7, 8, 9. *Are there not twelve hours in the day?* *Luke* 13.32. *Go, and tell Herod that Fox, &c.* *Ioh.* 7. 30. *No man laid hands, because his hour was not yet come*; and 8. 20. Secondly, Except by their death, they may bring more glory to God, then by their life; Old *Polycarpus* having served Christ fourscore yeers in life, if now to teeth of Lions he become a prey, it is his glory; When *Paul* hath finished his course, then time to die Martyr, 2 *Tim.* 4. 8. Thirdly, Marvellous are the dispensations of providence in this kinde; sometimes by peace propagating the Church, sometimes by persecution, *Act.* 9. 31. *Phil.* 1. 12. Under *Diocesian* the Emperour especially this was the course, when weekly, daily, hundreds of Christians were Martyred; in so much that the rate of one moneth taken, amounted to seventeen thousands; yet out of their Ashes sprung up New, which made *Tertullian* say, *Semen est sanguis Christianorum.*

I say in our Saviours language, *Luke* 12. *Fear not little Flock*, Though evill dayes approach us, and come on fast; yet if God have any service for us to do on earth, it is not all the spight of the

world ſhall ſhorten our dayes. Firſt, A hiding place we ſhall finde in the day of Gods wrath. Secondly, Fire ſhall not burn; The Lions ſhall not devour *Daniel*, while God hath ſervice for him here on earth; Some *Ebedmelech* God will raiſe up to ſpeak good for *Ieremie* to the King; ſome one or other: Boyling oyl, or lead, ſhall not deſtroy the Evangeliſt Saint *Iohn*; Marvells, Miracles, we read in Church-Story, of ſtrange deliverances of Saints.

If theſe move not; yet let us conſider. Firſt, Our hairs are numbred, *Luke* 12. Secondly, *Are ye not of more value then Sparrows? Precious in the ſight of the Lord is the death of his Saints.* I remember it for this end, becauſe perhaps our hearts may be ſurprized with fears, in this wavering condition we live in; and our fears may perhaps diſtract, or deject us: As they ſpake, *Dan.* 3. *The God we ſerve is able to deliver us*; and the Lord will certainly preſerve us in life, while he hath uſe of our ſervice upon earth: Why are we timorous, Oh we of little faith? Firſt, Meditate ſeriouſly the examples of Gods marvellous deliverances of his people in former times. Secondly, Think of the promiſe. Firſt, Either God will keep evils from us. Or, Secondly, Take us from evils, *Iſa.* 57. 1. Or, Thirdly, Support in, or under the evill, that the iſſue may be comfortable, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. 2 *Cor.* 12. 9.

Secondly, As precious things are not parted withall, but at a dear rate; So certainly it is true, dearly they pay for the blood of Saints that ſpill it:

it: Truly said *Cyprian*, There never was bloody persecution raised against the Church; but there followed it, as an acoluthite, some extraordinary remonstrance of Gods vengeance; in famine, sword, pestilence, captivity, and the like: From the time of righteous *Abel* to *Zechary*, *Matt.* 23. from that very day to this hath it been verified; *Cain* had his mark, as some say terrour, and trembling set on him; not slain indeed, lest the people should forget it, but plagued in the posterity: their vitious manners brought in the flood upon the world of the ungodly. Of *Manasseth* it is noted, He filled *Ierusalem* with blood from corner to corner; himself is carried away captive, and repenteth, yet to this cause is imputed the seventy yeers captivity in *Babylon*: And our Saviour giving reason of the destruction of *Ierusalem*, *Matth.* 23. saith, *They had killed the Prophets, and stoned them who were sent unto them*: Those Civill warres, read of in *Romane Monarchie*, began not, till persecutions raised against Christians; decay of the Empire in the heat of persecution; till at length *Mahomet* first, and after him the *Turk* had seized the more part of the Christian world: What should I speak of particular persons? There is scarce any noted for notorious in bloody persecutions, who is read to have died a dry death; or not to have lived in horror of conscience; or hardnesse of heart, and blasphemy, as we read of *Herod*, of *Pilate*, of *Iulian*, *&c.* I spare mention of those endlesse, and unsufferable torments, reserved for them against the life to come, 2 *Thes.* 1.5.

1. 5. Tribulation to them that trouble us, for them is reserved the mist of darknesse for ever: And do not marvell it; For, First, They cost Christ dear, even his own precious blood, 1 *Corinthians* 6. 20. 1 *Peter* 1. 19. Secondly, They were nearly knit to Christ, so near as members one to another, as the body to the head, *Ephes.* 1. 22. *Ephes.* 5. 30. and by compassion he is tortured when they are tormented. Thirdly, The malice bent toward Christians, in respect of Christianity, is bent indeed against Christ himself, the head of Christians; and certainly they who desire to root Christians out of the earth, would, if they could, pluck Christ out of heaven; In a word, The cause they suffer for, is Christs, no marvell if he so tenderly take the shedding of their blood, which for his sake they spill; *For thy sake are we killed.*

Amongst many presages of some great evill coming towards us; as, First, The death of so many Righteous. Secondly, The ripenesse of sinne. Thirdly, The unprofitablenesse of our smaller corrections. Fourthly, Our long Peace, and which grows up with it our deadly security. Fiftly, The melting of our hearts, as *Rahab* speaks, *Iosh.* 2. at the noise, or rumour, of the approaching enemy, &c. Give me leave to minde you of this as one, A principall meritorious cause of all the wrath that hangs over our heads.

You may call to minde the *Tempora Mariana*, The dayes of Queen *Mary*; How much precious blood of Saints was spilt as water upon the ground?

ground? which yet was never perhaps expiated by any wrath of God, or by any solemn humiliation of the people.

Lest any say, These dayes are past and gone; and we have since had gracious Princes, who have been Nursing-Fathers, & Nursing-Mothers to the Church, as was King JAMES, and Queen ELIZABETH, both of most blessed memory? It is true, but so had *Ierusalem* after *Manasseh*, *Iosiah*, that peerlesse King of *Iudah*, there was none like him before, or after; yet God remembred the sinne of *Manasseh*; and therefore sent *Nebuchadnezzar*, a wicked Idolater, to carry them away captive. Oh that we could think of it, and lay to heart this amongst all our other sinnes! Blood defiles the land; the blood of Innocents, the blood of Martyrs is precious in Gods eyes; we must by our smart know the price of it: Oh sirs, that amongst all our other sinnes, this might be matter of our humiliation; peradventure yet the Lord would return, and have mercy upon us: I confesse, we have many sinnes of our own personall committing, but this sinne of our fathers, how do we not tremble at? If that be it, that the sonne smarts not for the father, except he resemble in the fathers sinne? True indeed in eternall, not so in temporall judgements; that made *Daniel* confesse the sinne of his fathers, *Dan.* 9. and the Lord threaten to visit the sinnes of the fathers upon the children, *Exod.* 20.

It serves, me thinks, for caution to all the brood of *Cain* amongst us; whose hands indeed are re-

ſtrained, but hearts boyl with malice againſt Gods people for Chriſtianity-ſake: And I am perſwaded there are amongſt us, who, if times would ſerve for it, would as willingly carry a faggot to our burning, as they now ſhoot out their arrows, even bitter words. I beſeech you pray God to give you better hearts; ye have heard that their blood is precious in Gods ſight; it will coſt you dear; horrour, or ſtupidity of conſcience, and in the end everlaſting torment.

Secondly, Remember who ſaid, *He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of mine eye, Zech.* 2. 8. Thirdly, How ſtrict the charge is, *Touch not mine Anointed, and do my Prophets no harm, Pſal.*105.15. Fourthly, Set before your eyes the example of Gods wrath on former perſecutours; People, Nations, Kings, Monarchies, God hath not ſpared for this ſinne; Take we heed leſt he ſpare not us; Nay be ſure, he will not ſpare us, if we have hand, or leaſt ſtroke in their perſecution, in their blood; Not us of all people, for clearly hath the light of the glorious Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt ſhined long amongſt us, that we cannot, as miſled forefathers, pretend ignorance; they had been nurſed in Popiſh ſuperſtition, we in the true faith of Jeſus Chriſt; if we ſo farre fall away, as to imbrue our ſelves in the blood of Gods Saints, for us is reſerved the blackneſſe of darkneſſe for ever: Conſider what I ſay, and the Lord give you underſtanding in all things.

Thirdly, Precious, that is, highly he eſteems it, as men do things that are moſt precious, as their

their costliest jewels; As if there were not vertue in all the whole roll of Christian vertues so great as this, to suffer death for the Name of Christ, *Apoc.* 12. *They loved not their lives unto death*, *Heb.* 12, *Ye have not yet resisted unto blood in striving against sinne*, *Phil.* 1. 29. *To you it is given, not onely to beleeve, but to suffer for the name of Christ*; as if therein were *Munus*, I say not *in genere necessarii*, but *in genere boni*, I am sure, *magni*: Hence the Apostles joy in it, as in their glory, *Act.* 5. *ult.* and *Paul* when he would preferre himself before other Apostles, 2 *Cor.* 11. 22, 23, *&c.* useth this same Argument: Ancients talk of *Aureola Martyrum*, *The crown of righteousnesse is reserved for all that love Christs appearing*: but there is a Coronet upon that Crown, for them who suffer death for the Name-sake of Christ: Tears are put into a bottle, made varnish to our clarity, and glorious splendour; no drop of blood but wins us a river of glory, effusion of it, the whole Ocean, as it were, of beatitude.

It checks our cowardize; Oh we *tibai*, we cowards, dastards, so timorous in declining our glorry! Why are our spirits so dejected, as to begin already to halt twixt two opinions? or to resolve of neuterality? or joyning to the prevailing side? First, Know, there were sometimes who were ambitious of it, *Sum & ego Christianus*. Secondly, Christ promiseth to own us, if we confesse him, *Luk.* 9. 26. Thirdly, Protests to deny us, if we deny him, *Mat.* 10. 22. Fourthly, martyrdom is necessary in *Casu*, Absolutely, alwayes, *Quoad*

p æparationem animi, *Mat.* 10.38 39. Fiftly, weight of glory promifed to light momentany afflictions, 2 *Cor.* 4.17. Sixtly, *A cloud of witnesses*, yea our Saviour himself gone before us, *Heb.* 12.12, *&c.* What if the Lord select us from amongst his Army of Militants to be his Champions, to take up, or cast down the Gauntlet in the quarrell to his Kingdome? First, He hath promised to support, 1 *Cor.* 10.13. Secondly, Given us no Armour for the back, *Eph.* 6. but thunders wo to the back-slider, *Heb.* 10.38. Thirdly, Honors with conformity to Prophets, to Christ in suffering, *Mat* 5 12. Fourthly, We are far above the ordinary rate of his Saints, when he culls us out, as it were, to resist unto shedding of blood. Fiftly, Let us not forget it is the condition of our raigning with him, *Rom.* 8.17. 2 *Tim.* 2.12. Sixtly, This way went Christ into his Kingdome, *Luke* 24. *The disciple must not be above his Master.* Seventhly, *He hath begotten us to a lively hope by the resurrection of Iesus Christ*, 1 *Pet.* 1. 3. *and he first arising up, hath given us a pledge of our resurrection to immortality.* Now the good Lord affect our hearts with these things, that we may all rest assured of protection, so long as God hath use of our service in life; and couragiously resolve to glorifie him in our death, if he shall call us to suffer for his Name to the shedding of blood; knowing that our blood is precious in his sight, and that a drop of it is not shed, but wins us a River of blessednes. But may we not think it meant of death naturall of Saints? Certainly it is true, their death is precious: understand, death in the

childe

childe of God is not a meer passion; there is action, vertuous action in it, death of impious men is meerly passive, as of brutes; and not without resistance, and sluggish reluctation; and that I say not onely of Nature, but of Will too. Reasons of it are. First, This life they know, the other they know not. Secondly, Have no assurance of better state in the life to come. Thirdly, Soul in passage sees terrour of Judge; and knowing no share they have in the mediation of Christ, would live alwayes, that they might sinne alwayes: Now in the death of Gods Saints there is action, vertuous action, the complement of all vertuous qualities; Therefore St *Peter* calls it, *The laying down of the Tabernacle*; St *Paul*, *His departure*; *Giving up the ghost*; *Commending the soul unto God.* In which last act of a Christian, is the perfection of Christian vertues. First, No faith like this; *Though he kill me, when he killeth me, I trust in him, Iob* 13. 15. Secondly, No love like this; To love the present fruition of Christ. Thirdly, No hope like this; Even when we are dying, to expect life; when the body is falling, to expect Resurrection. Fourthly, No obedience like this; willing to consent to the will of God in dying; and herein to say, *Thy will be fulfilled, and I am content to do it, Psal.* 40. 8. This makes even the Naturall death of Gods Saints precious in his sight.

VERSE. XVI.

Oh Lord, Truly I am thy servant, I am thy servant, and the sonne of thine handmaid: Thou hast loosed my bonds.

TO discern Connexion in matter of Devotion is difficult, the motions thereof being for the most part affectionate; Howbeit, here is no difficulty: There is before mention of the favours God had done him; here is the use of the favour.

Therefore *I am thy servant*: And it contains a Protestation, or acknowledgement of his obligations to so gracious a God, as had rescued him from the jaws of death: wherein note we;

First, The occasion.

Secondly, The matter of the Protestation; amplified by the grounds of it.

Thirdly, The vowed expression of it, *Vers.* 17.

So see how favours of God work upon a gracious dispotion; forcing, after a sort, not onely to acknowledgement of obligation, but to tendering of service unto God, see 2 *Cor.* 5. 14, 15. *Isa.*6. 8. *Lo! here I am, send me*; hence Saint *Austin*, *Da quod jubes, jube quod vis.*

Reasons why it should be so, are; First, It is all the Lord requires of us, *Deut.*10.12. Secondly, It is the Condition of continuing them; wherefore, when either we grow slack in our acknowledgement, or divert our selves to other Authours,

Authours, God is pleased to remove them from us; *Rom.* 1.21. Gentiles cared not to keep God in their acknowledgment, therefore God gives them over to their own hearts lusts; *Hos.* 2. 8, 9. She knew not that it was I that gave her her corn, and wine, and oyl, &c. therefore I will take away my corn in the time thereof. Thirdly, Adde hereunto that hereto is linked, the increase of Gods favours, 2 *Sam.* 12. 8. *If that had been too little, I would have given thee more.*

Oh that there were such hearts in us! How would the Lord delight still to do us good? marvellous have his favours been, in the preservation, and deliverances of our State, yet what hath it bred, but increase of our rebellions? Should not the Lord be avenged on such a nation as this? It is amongst others a notable presage of our approaching calamity, that we have so turned his grace into wantonnesse; and as Saint *Paul* speaks, abused his long suffering, and bountifulnesse, to occasion of hardnesse of heart, *Rom.* 2.5.

See then, and examine how Gods favours work upon thee; It is something not to be despised amongst the testimonies of a gracious disposition, to be wrought to acknowledgement, and dutifull tendring of our selves unto God, you shall never or seldome see that disposition in the unregenerate; but the more they apprehend, or taste the favours of God, the more indulgent they grow to their own lusts: Whether it be, First, That they apprehend not Gods good in them, as they in the * Prophet, *He will do neither good, nor evill.* * Zeph. 1. 12.

Secondly,

Secondly, Or whether they think him to work after the necessity of his Nature, in loading them with his benefits. Thirdly, Or whether they think them merited by their own formality, and lip-outward-performances. Fourthly, Or whether they misapprehend the Nature of God, making him an Idoll made all of mercy, and goodnesse; though Saint *Paul* command to behold the * severity, as well as the bounty of God. But let such mindes be farre from Gods people; Certainly, it suits not with grace; is not in the ordinary course of it compatible with it; *Hos.* 3. 5. *They shall fear the Lord, and his goodnesse*; and because there is mercy with him, Therefore they will fear him, *Psal.* 130.4.

* Rom.11.22.

Thus ye shall discern it in your selves, or others; excepting the common interruptions that accompany humane infirmity. First, Every new favour brings accesse to the measure of serviceablenesse to God; That which *Iehu* speaks of *Baal*, *Ahab served Baal a little, I will serve him much more*, 2 *Kings* 10. they much more truly say of their God; therefore see the greatest Favourites have been most serviceable, *Moses* more then *Aaron*, or *Miriam*, *Num.*12. Saint *Paul* more then all the Apostles, 1 *Cor.* 15. 10. The woman in the Gospel loves much, because many sinnes have been forgiven, *Luke* 7.

The means to frame our hearts thereto are. First, Observation, and due record of Gods speciall favours to us; they are * renewed with every morning; if we had the wisdome to keep a

* Lam.3.23.

Diary

Diary of them, a daily Register; (*Experto credite*) they would warm our languishing affections. Secondly, There is a holy *Reminiscentia*, calling to minde of ancient favours; such especially, as in times of our ignorance, and vanity, God bestowed on us; even when we knew not God, served lusts, and divers pleasures, how many his loving kindnesses did we experiment? *David* thus fetcheth it *Ab ovo, Thou art my God, even from my youth, and on thee have I been cast, even since my mothers womb*; see Saint *Austin* in his Confessions. Thirdly, Next see, how little we have merited at Gods hand, as * *Iacob, I am lesse then all thy goodnesse, and trueth, which thou hast shewen me.* Fourthly, How contrary our merits have been, as Saint *Paul* amplifies it, *Eph.2.Tit.3.1 Tim.1.15,16.* Fiftly, How we have requited the Lord, *Deut.32.6.* since we have received mercy from him. Sixtly, How notwithstanding our slender retailings, God still is pleased to crown us with mercy, and loving kindnesse. Seventhly, How in our best performances, we come short of our duties, *Isa.64.6. Rom.7.18.* so that all we can say is this, we would do good, yet evill is present. Eighthly, See how many are behinde us in the favours of God we enjoy; *He hath not dealt so with other nations, Psal.* 147. 20. *And my servant Moses is not so, Num.12.*

* Gen.32.10.

Follows now the matter of the Protestation; in which observe we the manner of utterance in two things. First, Rhetoricall Apostrophe. Secondly, Ingemination, expressing either vehemencie of affection, or ardour, and heat of affection. Se-

 condly,

Secondly, The grounds of service, two; First, *Filius ancillæ*, see *Psal.* 86.16. Secondly, *Thou hast broken my bonds*, see *Nah.*1.13. Thirdly, The expression of it, *ver.*17. *I will sacrifice praise.*

We also have causes the same to subscribe, and professe our selves the servants of God; yea more by many then *David* here alledgeth, for he instanceth in Temporall favours onely. First, We also are *filii ancillæ*, sonnes of his handmaid. First, Borne children of the Church. Secondly, Many of us having had Christian education under Christian Parents; Certainly, these much increase our obligation. It is no small favour of God to be borne in the Church of God, no slender tie to his service that accrues from our imitation by Baptisme thereunto; if ye consider, Turks, Pagans, Infidells, what can you say of them but as Saint *Paul* of *Ephesians*, *Chap.*2. *They are without God, without Christ, without hope, aliens from the covenants of promise, from the common wealth of Israel.* They do not derogate from Gods mercy, who say, That without Gods extraordinary mercy, they perish all in their sins, & die under guilt of eternall damnation. Reasons. First, No name given under heaven whereby we can be saved, but onely the *Name of *Iesus*. Secondly, No means to partake him, but the knowledge and faith of him; The * Knowledge of my righteous servant shall justifie many. Thirdly, No means to know him ordinary but the * Word; Nor Creatures, nor any Naturall notice can reveale him. 1. *Cor.*1.21.

*Act.4.12.

*Isa.53.11.

*Rom.10.14

Secondly, If we look back to ancient Times, where

where was a seed of Election, the Lord was pleased extraordinarily to grant means of Vocation; so to *Naaman*, he sends him to the Prophet; so to the Eunuch, he sends him to Hierusalem, and *Philip* to him, *Act.8.* Secondly, If we consider other Assemblies of men that boast themselves to be orthodox Churches of God, and are not; so will the Blessing farther appear. False and erronious faith in *Fundamentalibus* is as perilous as flat Infidelity; for example; To beleeve; that there is a God, and to beleeve that this God is not Just, or True, or Mercifull, is as perillous in point of Salvation, as to be an Atheist, and to think there is no God: To beleeve that there is a Mediatour twixt God and Man, the Man *Christ Iesus*; and to beleeve he mediates, or merits by us, is as perillous as to beleeve, There is no Mediatour twixt God and Man: To worship God, and the Creature as God, is as perillous, as to worship the Creature in stead of God: To worship God otherwise then he will be worshipped, or then he hath prescribed us to worship him in his Word, is as dangerous as to be meerly without all worship: *1 Sam.15.21. Rebellion is as the sinne of Witchcraft*, and in vain they worship, who worship after doctrines of men, *Mat.15.9.* And if this be the Faith and Religion of some so utterly unwarrantable; so crossing to the word of our Faith, the salvation of our souls, I say, If this be so, then say not but it is a favour of God to be born in the Church, where God is worshipped as he out, and himself hath prescribed, and wherein we have the true means of salvation; and

as they ſpake ſcoffingly to our Saviour, *The way of God taught truly.*

This favour of God we all enjoy; yet who is there who thinks his obligation to ſerve God hereby increaſed? We dream of the Priveleges of the Church, and think it ſufficient we are born members of it, without taking notice of what they binde us unto. Firſt, Know every favour of God is an obligation to duty, and the greater the favour, the greater the obligation, ſee *Pſal.* 118. 2,3,4. Secondly, Where the favors are vouchſafed, and the ſervice not performed, the greater, and heavier will be the vengeance; They that ſinned without
*Rom. 2. 12. * Law, ſhall periſh without Law, they that in Law, by Law; and *Matth.* 11. *Tyre* and *Sidon*, *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* are not ſo ſeverely tormented as children of the Church. Thirdly, Take heed leſt hereby
*Apoc. 2. 5. we occaſion the Lord to remove our * Candleſtick, to take from us the being of our Church; and make us by wofull experience know the difference twixt ſerving God, and ſerving Idols, beleeving Chriſt, and giving way to Antichriſt.

If in the other Senſe *filius ancillæ* be interpreted,
*2 Tim. 1. & 3. Son of a gracious Mother, ſuch as *Lois* and *Eunice* were to *Timothy*, certainly the favour is great, and much increaſeth our obligation to ſerve God, to be borne, and have education from religious Parents. Firſt, Such birth brings us within the Covenant, *Gen.* 17. 7. 1 *Cor.* 7. 14. entitles us to the promiſes of this life, and upon condition of reſemblance, and imitation, to the promiſes of the life to come. Secondly, Advantageth us much towards

towards Heaven, whiles we have; First, Our information, and nurture in the fear of the Lord. *Ephes.* 6.4. Secondly, The ayd of their Prayers, and Counsells, and Admonitions, as * *Eli, Oh my sonnes, do not so wickedly.* Thirdly, Their daily example, which by a kinde of naturall instinct we are inclined to imitate. * 1 Sam.2.23.

Lord me thinks what a shame, and horrour is it to see a degenerous seed; and how do I perswade my self horrour of conscience shall be one day augmented, torments of Hell encreased to them, who besides the ordinary and common means of salvation in the Church, have had their birth and breeding under religious Parents?

I know not how we pride our selves in this, that we can talke of the Devotion, and Religion hath been in our progenitours, and there are who stick not, though profanely, to say, They hope for their Parents sake, and through their faith and piety to go to heaven, though themselves walke in the wayes of the wicked. First, Have you forgotten who said, *Think not to say, We have* * *Abraham to our father.* Secondly, Do you not remember who said, *That if the righteous beget a* * *Sonne that commits abomination, He shall die in his sinne;* yea, be the more tormented because he had so gracious birth, and education? Thirdly, Have ye forgotten the distinction, of children by birth, and children by imitation; As the righteous sonne of a wicked father, dieth not for his fathers wickednesse; so lives not the wicked sonne of a righteous father by the fathers righteousnesse, see * Ioh.8.39. * Ezek.18.14,24.

Ioh. 8. Wherefore you to whom God hath granted this favour of all others, strive to excell in goodnesse, and think as *David*, your very birth of such Parents binds you to extraordinary serviceablenesse towards God.

Verse XVI, XVII.

Thou hast loosed my bonds: I will offer to thee the sacrifice of Thanksgiving; and will call upon the Name of the Lord.

THe second ground of his Service, His Manumission; which under this Trope of loosing the bonds, *Nah.* 1.13. the signe put for the thing signified, is signified; how follows it? Thy servant, for thou hast freed me; Saint *Peter* answers, 1 *Pet.* 2.16. though free from other bondage, yet still the servants of God; this being the condition of our liberty received from other bonds, that we might serve God.

As if *David* would teach us this lesson; That our Christian liberty mancipates us unto God; or, That the freedome God gives us, is but an exchange of our service; so *Zacharie*, *Luk.* 1.74. so *Peter*, 1 *Pet.* 2.16. so *Paul* every where, *Rom.* 6. 18. *being freed from sinne, ye are made servants of righteousnesse*; and *Gal*, 5. 13.

No where doth Scripture teach us, That the liberty given us of God, or purchased by Christ, makes us *nostri juris*, men at our owne absolute dispose, to live as we list; 1 *Cor.* 6. 19, 20. *ye are bought*

bought with a price, therefore ye are not your owne; for though you be freed from other Masters, yet his servants you are who hath manumitted you.

Where come to be reproved Two grosse sinnes of these Times. First, The Understanding. Secondly, Misapplying, or misusage of our Christian liberty issuing there-from.

Of the first: That worthy Doctrine of Christian liberty so plentifully taught by the Apostle, from the Law; how many be there that misunderstand? It is true that Saint *Paul* saith, *Rom.6. We are not under the Law, but under grace*; and *Gal.* 3.25. *Now faith is come, we are no longer under the Schole-master*; and 1 *Tim.* 1.9. *The Law is not made for a righteous man, &c.* with these grounds misunderstood, how many runne wilde into all licentiousnesse? Every man when his humour takes him, taking liberty to sinne, because he is not under the Law: And when we explicate, not under the Law Ceremoniall, or Judiciall; see the shifts licentious nature hath, when they desire to be enlarged, that Law is Jewish; so Papists, for Images; a Law for Jews in respect of proneneſse to idolatry; So Anabaptists, from oathes imposed to decide controversies, a Law peculiar to Jews for their rudenesse, and propensity to sinne: So some profane Antisabbatarians of the fourth; Anabaptists of the fifth; Gnosticks of the seventh; Priscillianists of the ninth; that if ever there were times to say as *David*, now are the dayes; *It is* * *time for thee Lord to lay to thine hand*, Psal.119.126.

for

for men have destroyed thy Law.

Let us be warned to be better informed in our judgements; and remember what our Saviour saith, *Matth.* 5. 17. *He never came to destroy the Law, and Prophets*; and what *Paul*, *Rom.* 3. 31. *We do not abrogate the Law by faith.* Thus understand. First, From obligation to Laws Ceremoniall, and Judiciall, particular to Jews, we are freed; so that now no longer lies bond or any mans conscience simply, as from Gods Precept, to observe dayes, and times, and difference of meats, and apparell. Secondly, Yet though that be so, we are not freed from obligation to obedience of the Morall Law; for that is the Law of nature in all the parts of it; given to *Adam* in innocencie, when as yet was no difference betwixt people and people. Thirdly, But when we say we are free from the Law, as the Law is abrogated to us, thus we desire Scriptures should be understood. First, From the Curse of the Law, *Gal.* 3.13. and 5. 18, 23. Secondly, From the Justification of the Law, requiring every man to bring unto Gods judgement seat the perfect righteousnesse of the Law of his own personall performance, *For without the Law is the righteousnesse of God revealed*, *Rom.* 3.21,22. Thirdly, From the rigour of the Law, that promiseth no life, nor reward, but to the perfect in obedience; for our weak services are accepted, yea crowned, by promise of God in the Gospel. Fourthly, From exasperating vertue of the Law expressed by *Paul*, *Rom.* 7. 8. see *Psal.* 40. *But from obedience of the Law no man is freed. Mat.* 5.17,18.

The

The second errour reproved, is the misapplying, and abuse of the Doctrine of Christian liberty, even when it seems to be rightly understood; as amongst our more intelligent people, that will confesse they stand bound to the obedience of the Decalogue; and their freedome to be onely from the Curse,&c. yet may we observe many abuses of Christian liberty. First, S. *Paul* notes one frequent in his time, *Rom.* 6. 1. It seems this; That because they were not under the Curse of the Law; therefore we may sinne: *Mention*, if I see it not rife amongst many of our people; I would it were not amongst some professing best mindes, that because there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ, therefore they take liberty to sinne, *Rom.* 8. 1. But where learnt we thus to turn the grace of God into wantonnesse, that because Christ hath died to redeem us from the Curse, therefore we should sinne against God? Me thinks that of *Paul* should rather be our inference, 2 *Cor.* 5. 14. That the love of Christ should constrain us to live to his glory; withall, therein we should behold the strictnesse, and severity of God against sinne, which nothing could expiate but the death of the Sonne of God: and can we forget what Saint *Paul* speaks, *Heb.* 10. If we sin wilfully, there remains no more sacrifice for sin: and how can we be assured that we have share in freedome from the Curse, not being freed from the reign of sinne? *Rom.* 6. 2. Yea, see the qualification of men freed from damnation, *Rom.* 8. 1. They are such as walk not after flesh, but after Spirit.

Secondly, Saint *Iames* notes another; that from the other part of freedome from Morall Law, inferred a lawfull neglect of good works; for sith we are justified by faith alone, what necessity of good works? see *Iam.* 2. But know we, though faith justifie alone, yet is not alone, *Gal.* 5. 6. though heat of fire warm alone, yet is it not without light: And are there no uses of good works, but onely to justifie us? What say you to these? *Obedience to God, Matth.* 5. 16. *Eph.* 2. 10. *The glory we bring to God in adorning the Gospel, Tit.* 2. *In stopping the mouthes of aliens,* 1 *Pet.* 2. *In preparing them to glorifie God,* 1 *Pet.* 2. and 3. and is it nothing, that by them *we make calling, and election sure?* 2 *Pet.* 1. 10. And how shall we assure our selves that we are justified, except by our works? see *Iames* 2. And, me thinks, the glorious reward, and crown of righteousnesse, which God hath prepared for them that love his appearing, 2 *Tim.* 4. 8. should excite us; see *Mat.* 10. 20.

The third abuse is that of the freedome from rigour of the Law; that because God hath promised to accept our endeavours, though mixt with many imperfections, therefore cry out, *Quorsum* such precisenesse, and such striving for perfection? as if the Lord had not promised to judge us after the mitigation of the Gospel. True it is, there is such a promise to spare us, *Mal.* 3. 17. yet withall, there is a precept to make * strait steps to our feet: To walk * accurately; To keep our selves * unspotted of the world; To abstain from the very * appearance of evill. Secondly, He

* Heb. 12. 13.
* Eph. 5. 15.
* Iam 1. 27.
* 1 Thes. 5. 22

He that promised to accept our endeavours, required that they should be strenuous, and bent to the utmost of our ability, *Act.* 24. 16. *Phil.* 3. 12, 13, 14. and so onely God spares as a father the sonne that serves him. Thirdly, The imperfections which God hath promised to pardon, issue not from presumption, or malice, but from ignorance, and infirmity: There are three sundry degrees of actuall sinnes in men. First, Such as issue from ignorance, *Psal.* 19. 12. *Cleanse me from my secret sinnes*; *Heb.* 7. *The high Priest offers sacrifice for sinnes of ignorance.* Secondly, From infirmitie or passion, *Gal.* 6. 1. 1 *Ioh.* 2. *For these were ordained sacrifices of atonement and propitiation.* Thirdly, From presumption, *Num.* 15. 30. And he that thus sinnes dies without ransome, for he hath in pride of his heart contemned the Commandment of God; and what do they lesse, that thus presume of Gods mercy and bounty? See *Deut.* 29. 19, 20.

But mark we in the next place, the ground of *Davids* protestation, *For thou hast loosed my bonds*; and see whether it be not applicable unto us: Besides that freedome from Civill thraldome, and from Spirituall bondage under the Law, Morall & Ceremonial, in that sense that hath been explained, There is yet a threefold liberty, which we in this Church are partakers of, and they should be all so many obligations to do service unto God. First, What say you to this? Freedome from thraldome to Idolls, and humane Traditions; Saint *Paul* mentions it to *Galatians* as no small

blessing of God, *Gal.* 4. 8, 9. and *Col.* 2. If we look back to our forefathers, or cast our eye upon other Nations Christian, what miserable vassallage live they in under Antichrist,& the Idolls of wood and stone which he hath erected? Besides the many will-worships which he forceth upon the consciences of men more then the Commandments of God, from these bonds God hath freed us. Secondly, Come yet to a more generall favour of God; Those of you, I mean, whom Gods truth hath made free; What *Paul* speaks of * *Romans*, was true of us, We were once the servants of sinne; we served our lusts, and divers pleasures, we once were holden * captive of the Devill, to do his will; but God, who is rich in mercy hath crucified our lusts; that now we can say, as *Paul, Rom.* 7. 25. *Though in our flesh we serve sinne unwillingly, yet in our spirit we serve the Law of God, desiring to* * *captivate every thought, and affection to the obedience of Iesus Christ.* Thirdly, This is not all; Saint *Paul* tells us of a spirit of bondage, whose fruit is fear, *Rom.* 8. 15. and it is in every unregenerate man; The nature of it conceive thus; First, The bent, and propension to sinne, remains in the unregenerate, nothing but fear, or sense of wrath restrains it; therefore that fear, or sense, removed; they adde drunkennesse to thirst, as *Pharaoh, Simon Magus, &c.* Secondly, There is an aversenesse, and abhorrence from all spirituall obedience; nothing but fear of wrath, or hope of reward excites, or continues it; therefore see *Israelites, Mal.* 3. 14. when they see the proud blessed

* Rom. 6. 20.

* 2 Tim. 2. 26.

* 2 Cor. 10. 5.

sed, say it is vain to serve God: From this spirit of bondage to fear, hath God freed his children, *Psal.* 51. 12. Stablish me with thy free Spirit; *Psal.* 119. Set my heart at liberty, I will runne the way of thy Commandments; And again, Oh that my wayes were made so direct; Where Gods Spirit is, there is liberty, 2 *Cor.* 3. 17. see 1 *Tim.* 1. 9. Lord, that these might be so many motives to vow our selves servants for ever of the living God.

We are not ignorant of Satans wiles; and we know what our selves and sinnes have deserved; the plague that God threats to * *Israel*, to be given up to serve Idolls of wood, and stone; that we may by experience know difference twixt the service of God, and the service of Idolls: but sure if that betide us, miserable is our condition; better we had never known the holy Commandment, then knowing to turn back. * Deut 28.

Secondly, Like let us think whose hearts God hath enlarged, and set free from the slavish subjection to our sinnes; whose eyes God hath enlightened to see the filthinesse of drunkennesse, of adultery, &c. And to whom he hath given grace heretofore to detest them; if we shall now again be intangled, our latter end shall be worse then our beginning, see *Mat.* 12.

Thirdly, And for those amongst us to whom God hath given that spirit of ingenuity, with freedome of heart to serve God; let them take heed, how they quench the Spirit, the holy motions, whereby God would bend them to free-

dome, and chearfulneſſe in his ſervice. Conſider, Firſt, How bitter ſuch dulneſſe of ſpirit is to the conſcience, when God awakes it; no leſſe to a gracious minde, then groſſer ſinnes have been in their firſt entrance to Chriſtianity. Secondly, Next, how they looſe for the time, the beſt evidence of their being accepted with God, there being no ſervice that pleaſeth him, but what is offered with a willing minde; ſee 1 *Chron.* 28. 9. Thirdly, What an aggravation to every omiſſion it will one day be, that when God gave us alacrity, liberty, and freedome of ſpirit to ſerve him, yet we were backward.

Follows now in the ſeventeenth Verſe, the expreſſion of *Davids* ſerviceableneſſe unto God, in two particulars.

Firſt, Thankſgiving.

Secondly, Invocation.

In the firſt we have two things.

Firſt, The Office.

Secondly, The Stile it hath; Sacrifice.

Of the firſt: Thankfulneſſe implies four things. Firſt, Acknowledgement of the favour of the Benefactour, and our obligation in reſpect of the favour; ſee 2 *Tim.* 1. 16. *Paul* to *Oneſiphorus*, and *Rom.* 16. 4. Secondly, Mindfulneſſe, and remembrance of the favour done to us; hence it is a tax upon the chief Butler, *Gen.* 40. 23. that he remembred not *Ioſeph*, but forgate him. Thirdly, Publiſhing with praiſe and commendation, the bounty, and love, and goodneſſe of the Benefactour,

ctour, as *Paul* to *Timothy*, *Onesiphorus* his kindnesse. Fourthly, Compensation, or recompense, according to ability, and opportunity given us of God; see 2 *Sam.* 9. 1, 3. *Is there yet any of the house of Saul, to whom I may shew kindnesse for Ionathans sake*; so towards *Barzillai*, 2 *Sam.* 19. 32, 33, 38. And they have in a sense all their place in that thankfulnes we are to perform to our God.

Of the first, see *Lam.* 3. 22. when he saw the Lord preserving the remnant of his people, *It is of the Lords mercy that we are not confounded*; *Iacob*, *Gen.* 32. 10. *I am lesse then the least of all thy mercies, and all thy truth which thou hast shewen*; 1 *Cor.* 15. 9, 10 *Not meet to be an Apostle*; *but by grace I am what I am*; see also, 1 *Tim.* 1. 12, 13, 14. which All of obligation, and debt of service we owe to God in respect of his favours; *Quid retribuam Domino?* As if he had said, A debt I see, wherein I stand bound to my God, but how I shall render it I know not; 1 *Thes.* 3. 9 *What thanks can we render unto God, &c.*

Opposite unto this Branch of Thankfulnes are. First, Slighting of the favours of God bestowed on us, without any so much as notice, or acknowledgement in their fruition; How many favours are renewed with every morning, which yet we take nonotice of? As that the Lord adds this day to our time of repentance, or growth in grace; that his temporalls of health, and use of all his good creatures are continued unto us. Or secondly, We discern no favour of God in them, nor think our selves obliged to that endlesse Majestie

for

for the continuance, or increase of them; but either think them to come of ordinary course; or as it should seem for some obligation that lies upon God, either in his own Nature, or from our merit to conferre them.

The second is remembrance of the benefits bestowed on us; as *David* to his soul, *Psal.* 103. 2. *Forget not all his benefits*: To this end tended the annuall festivities of the Jews that we read of, *Num.* 29. to continue remembrance of the favours of God; To this end the Sabbath in old Testament; To this the Passeover, *Exod.* 12. and our Sacrament of the Supper succeeding in stead thereof; Hence is the charge *Numb.* 6. 12. *Take heed, lest thou forget not the Lord thy God*; and that tax of ingratitude laid upon *Israel*, *Psal.* 106. 13. *They soon forgate his works*: And I would to God it concerned not us, nor were imputable unto us; Whiles favours are new, we can a little overly, and for fashion say, God be thanked; but once year'd and day'd, they scarce ever come more into our thought: Oh that *David*, minde were in us! How should the Lord still delight to do us good? See him fetching it *Ab utero*, for his own particular, from the wombe; and for the people of God, *Psal.* 105, 106, 107. all penned to minde the people of God of his ancient benefits, delivering them out of Ægypt, &c. We also have had our deliverances from the great thraldome under the tyranny of *Rome*; there be yet living who may remember it, but scarce take notice of it in nature of a benefit; What should I tell of the restoring

of

of the purity of the Gospel in the dayes of Queen ELIZABETH? The admirable victories of eighty eight? The deliverance from Gunpowder-Treason? Our long peace in the reign of King JAMES? Our preservation from the pestilence? &c. They are year'd and day'd, and therefore forgotten amongst us. Take heed, lest some worse thing happen not unto us.

In the dayes of King EDWARD, God caused the light of his glorious Gospel to shine unto our fathers, as under *Iosiah* to *Israel*; it seems they knew not the price of that blessing; therefore the Lord took him away from the evill to come, and delivers us over to be a prey to our enemies; What bloody cruelty, what fierie triall afterward issued, we are not, I think, so Lethargicall, as to forget; if ever the same prove our lot, thank our selves, for that we have so soon forgotten the great favours bestowed upon our Nation, &c.

The third Branch of Thankfulnesse, is publication of the favour of God, with praise of the bounty therein shewed towards us; This is that *David* calls praising the Lord; that is, not onely commemorating, but setting out the excellencie of his favours bestowed upon us; And this indeed is a speciall part of Thankfulnesse: Therefore observe how Rhetoricall the Saints of God are in all circumstances of Amplification; Sometimes admiring the riches of Gods favour, as *Ps.* 31. 19. *Oh how great is thy goodnesse!* see also, *Psal.* 8. Sometimes confessing they passe knowledge, see *Ephes.*

3. 19. and 1 *Cor.* 2. 9. Sometimes in a heap of Epithetes setting forth their excellencie; as *Eph.* 2. 4. *Rich in mercie; great love*; and 1 *Tim.* 1. 14. *The grace of God was exceeding abundant*; Sometimes, comparing themselves with others of equall merit, *Psal.* 147. 20. Sometimes considering their own demerits, 1 *Tim.* 1. 13. their little thought of the favour, see *Rom.* 5. 10. and *Rom.* 10. 20.

Oppofite unto this Branch of Thankfulnesse are. First, Extenuating, or lessening the favours God hath bestowed upon us, and vilifying them, as *David* speaks of *Israel, They* * *despised the pleasant land*; and as the instance is plain in the unthankfull *Israelites*, what at first they admired, *Exo.* 16. at last cryed out of, as of a bread that dryed up their souls. Secondly, Accounting his blessings curses, and his favours rather Tokens of his wrath, and displeasure, as *Israel* in their hunger and thirst; Would God we had tarried in *Egypt*, when we sate by the flesh-pots, and had meat to the full; and was it because there was no graves in *Egypt*, that the Lord hath brought us out into this barren wildernesse? And I wish we were not culpable of both these signes of unthankfulnesse! Lord, Who knows the power of thy wrath? *Psa.* 90. 11. The price of thy blessing, that sweet blessing of peace, which *David* prayed for to *Ierusalem, Let peace be within thy walls, and plenteousnesse within thy palaces*; and *Psal.* 29. 21. The Lord shall give unto his people the blessing of peace; *To sit every one under our own vine, and every one under our own fig-tree.* Alas! How hath it been vilified?

* Psal. 106. 24.

Nay,

Nay, How hath it been thought a curse to the land, by earthly-minded men; and warre, one of the * sorest arrows of the Almighty, wished for rather then peace? Sure I cannot deny but mischiefs many have issued from peace; as that of *Moab*, *Ier.* 48. *Our savour remains in us*; as stinking waters gather filth, and putrefaction, so occasionally, peace. Secondly, Security, and contempt of God, as *Laish* dwelt * securely. Thirdly, Luxurie, and intemperance, the sinne of * *Sodom*, through abundance of idlenesse. But comes this from peace, or from our abuse of peace? Is it the native fruit of this gracious blessing of God, or not rather grown upon us by accident through corruption of our filthy hearts? So of the word of God, and worship, the prime of Gods outward favours; insomuch, that it bears the stile often of the * kingdome of heaven; yet who esteems it according to the worth of it? Nay, be there not that think it not even the scourge of the times; never merry world since this preaching came up: and generally, how wanton are we grown the best of us, that every man must have it suited in matter, and manner to his own fancy; some are for plainnesse; some for nicety, and novelty; and nothing pleaseth but what is above the ordinary, &c. Well, brethren, time was when the word of God was * precious; that was, when it was rare. Secondly, Times may be, (God grant they approach not) when we may again see *Amos* his * famine.

* Ezek.14.21.
* Iudg 18.11.
* Ezek.16.49.
* Matth.13.11.
* 1 Sam.3.1.
* Amos 8.11.

Time being to speak of other discontents at

Gods favour, and not onely vilifying of his blessings, but murmuring at the hand which conferres them: The Remedies of it are these. First, Consider the misery of the want of these blessings, which we enjoy to the full, till we nauseat again, and our stomack recoils at them. Secondly, Weigh well how farre inferiour our merits are to the least of these favours of God, *Gen.* 32. 10. Thirdly, See how many are behinde us, if not in the substance, yet in the measures of the blessings: Lord Sirs; we look to those above us that excite our envie; would we cast our eyes downwards to those below us, we should see, and say, the Lord had exceeded mercy towards us; and that his love to us, hath passed knowledge, and comprehension.

The fourth Branch of Thankfulnesse; is Compensation, or Recompense: Hath this place, or passage twixt God and man? Sure we have Gods complaint frequent, for Non-retaliation, as *Deut.* 32. 6. *Do ye thus requite the Lord?* and 2 *Chron.* 32. 33. *Hezekiah rendred not to the Lord according to the kindnesse done unto him.*

There are three sorts of Retaliation. First, One equall, or equivalent to the favours of God; This no Papist dares avow possible to be yeelded from man to God, *Psal.* 16. 2. *Our well doing extend th not to God*; and, *What is it to him that we are righteous? Iob* 35. and, *I am lesse then the least of all thy mercies, Gen.* 32. 10.

Secondly, Proportioned, which in a sort they say is answerable to the favours God hath done us;

us; and not *Ex pacto* onely, or by vertue of promise; but something out of the native vertue, and excellencie of the works done, God is made amends for his favours; yet it was wont to be said, *Finiti ad infinitum nulla est proportio*, all that we do, or can do, is but * duty; yea, as we do it, not so much as duty, *Isa.* 64. 6. And moreover, of his own we give him; It is he himself that works all our good works in us, *Isa.* 26. 12. * Luke 17. 10.

Thirdly, yet there is which God is pleased to interpret, and accept as rendrings from us; even whatsoever according to our gracious abilities by way of thankfulnesse, we tender unto him; so *Peter*, 1 *Pet.* 2. 5. *Acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.* As, First, The ordering of our conversation aright, *Psal.* 50. 23. When we so live, as God in us may be glorified, *Mat.* 5. 16. Secondly, When in our Callings particular, we seek the advancement of Gods glory, as *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 14, 15. Thirdly, Speciall occasions oft fall out, when it becomes our lot to stand up for the support of Gods glory, perhaps with hazard of state, or life; as in *Hesters* case, *Hest.* 4. 16. *If I perish, I perish:* These God interprets, and accepts as thankfull rendrings, and retaliations to his bounty. Wherein how answerable we have been to the favours God hath bestowed upon us, and their measures; if I should hold my peace, the stones would speak; What Nation under the Sunne hath been able to compare with us in all favours, that God hath done us? as the Lord speaks to * *Israel*; and considering the measures, and continuance of the * Deut. 3.

blessings, we have been as peerles in ingraditude; turning the grace of God into wantonnesse, increasing our rebellions, as God hath his blessings upon us: I could wish we could see the prefermēts we have had above many our neighbours, in the measure of the means of salvation, and the continuance of them; the issues whereof, except in point of knowledge, and that but in a few, hath been no great increase of our obedience; but that in justice, and charity, and mercy, many ignorants have gone before us. Do we thus requite the Lord? This let us rest assured of generally for our kingdome; The Lord who hath made his mercies marvellous towards us, will make his plagues as wonderfull, that we may be a byword, *Deut.* 28. And at the last day; it will be true of us, that Christ speaks of unthankfull cities, *Mat.* 11. The state of heathen shall be more tollerable then ours.

The Stile here given to Thanksgiving; It is a Sacrifice; Metaphorically ye must understand, and by Allusion; so called, because all those Sacrifices offered in the old Leviticall Law did type out this same thanksgiving, (all Ceremonies of the old Testament, as *Gratian* tells us, having in them to be considered both superficies, and *Moralis intelligentia*) as the thing which should succeed in room, or stead thereof; in which respect our * bodies; our * goods; our thanks are called Sacrifices; The fruit of our lips, *Heb.* 13. 15. *Hos.* 14. 2. Or else secondly, Because in esteem with God more then al sacrifices of bullocks, or rams,

* Rom 12. 1.
* Phil 4. 18.

as

as *Psal.* 50. 8, 9. which also perhaps makes *David* chuse it as the speciall evidence expressing his serviceablenesse to God. Lo here then the excellencie of thankfulnesse, farre above all sacrifices, or other services we perform unto God; see *Psa.* 50. 23. He honoureth me, comparatively understand it, more then he who brings the fat of rams, or ten thousand rivers of oyl, *Mic.* 6.

Lord, that we could set our selves to it; sure it is the service of heaven, wherein Angels, and * Saints are imployed; and they who rightly perform it, as Saint *Paul* speaks, *Phil.* 3. 20. *Have already their conversation in heaven.*

* See Isa. 6. Apoc. 6.

At this time especially it is necessary, when we come to receive the pledges of Gods love, and goodnesse in our Redemption; whereupon the whole action hath the name of Eucharist; and in which respect, the Fathers called it a sacrifice, and the Table from which they offered it, in a spirituall sense, an Altar; wherefore the Sacrament of the Lords Supper was by them also stiled *Sacramentum Altaris.*

These are helps available thereto. First, See our portion, or sharing in the blessing; that we may be able to say as *Paul*, every of us; *Christ loved* * *me, and gave himself for me*; it is lip-labour that without this is performed in respect of Redemption: Thus discern it. First, Redeemed from vain conversation, 1 *Pet.* 1. 18. Secondly, Setting our selves apart to serve God in righteousnesse, and true holinesse, *Luke* 1. 74. Thirdly, *Zealous of good works*, *Tit.* 2. 14. wherein we may bring

* Gal. 2. 20.

bring glory to God. Fourthly, Permitting our Redeemer to dispose of us to his glory, whether by life or death; out of this ground, *That we are not our own*, 1 *Cor*.6.20.

Second particular wherein *David* meant to expresse his service to God, is Invocation; Calling upon him onely in case of necessity.

That this is an honour, and service due to God, Scriptures are evident; insomuch, that Tropically it is put for the whole service of God, as 1 *Cor*. 1. 2. and 2 *Tim*. 2. 19. And consider what honour it gives him, you will easily acknowledge it. First, Thereby we acknowledge him to be Giver of all good things, see *Iam*. 1. 17. and that but from him we can expect nothing that is good. Secondly, Of power, in that therein we acknowledge him able to do above all that we can ask, or think, *Ephes*. 3. 20. Thirdly, Of love to man no lesse then fatherly, *Matth*. 7. 11. wherein the Lord so glories, that he hath given it a speciall Name, φιλανθρωπία, *Tit*. 3. 4. Fourthly, Of mercie, and compassion, wherein the Lord so glories, as in no one of his Attributes; see 2 *Cor*.1. 3. *The Father of mercies, and God of all consolation.* Fiftly, Of Dominion, and Lordship absolute, and independant; for whilest we pray God for all we have need of, what do we but acknowledge him to have in himself absolute power to give, or not to give farther then by his promise he hath pleased to make himself our debtour? Sixtly, Of his truth, supposing his *Pactum*, his Covenant, and promise that he hath passed to us; wherefore also

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ye see it often acknowledged as inducement to grant; see *Neh.* 1. *Dan.* 9. All this shews abundantly, that it is a service due to God. To all these might be added also, that hereby God is himself acknowledged as the alone καρδιογνώστης, Knower of the heart. Now whether in propriety, and incommunicably, is now grown matter of question; Conceive thus; whether no creature, Saint, nor Angel, may participate with him in it, in any degree? Thus farre goes consent; That nor Saint, nor Angel may be prayed unto as Authours, or Givers, either of * grace, or glory; because the things we need, exceed the power of all creatures to give; To which also the Papists themselves adde consent of the whole Church, that nor Saint, nor Angel is to be invocated as Authour of the blessings. * Psal. 84. 11.

How then are they interessed in this honour?

Answ. As mediatours of impetration, or obtaining the good things we have need of; and yet not as principall Intercessors, but as such, as by Christ and his intercession commend our suits unto God: Wherein you must understand they palliate onely that horrible Idolatry they practise in Invocation of Saints; for whoso looketh to the forme of their prayers, shall finde that they pray to them as Lords of the gifts. Secondly, That they send them not to God by Christ as Mediatour of Intercession, but as men who by their own merits may commend our suits unto God, and even oblige him to grant what we pray for.

The question at last comes to this issue; upon

ſuppoſall that they pray to them onely as mediatours of impetration; Whether we may invocate Saints departed as mediatours of impetration, or entreat them to entreat for us favours from God? They ſay, Yes, becauſe we may ſo do to men on earth, and that without any derogation to the mediation of Jeſus Chriſt?

Anſw. But it follows not; for a twofold Reaſon. Firſt, Becauſe for the one we have a Mandate, to begge the aid of living * Saints prayers. Secondly, We have example of Saints, as of *Paul*, *Eph.6.Rom.15.* Thirdly, We have promiſe from God that the prayer of faith ſhall finde audience, *Iam.* 5. neither of which we finde of Saints departed. Secondly, For that we have means to make known our wants to Saints on earth, none at all to informe, at leaſt our mentall deſires, to Saints departed; * *Abraham knows us not:* And for means of convaying them to their notice, there is none which hath foundation in Scripture, what ever they pretend for revelation of Angels converſing with us, *Luk.* 15.

* Iam 5.16.

* Iſa.63.16.

Anſw. We deny not but at times they converſe with us on earth; but that they have their continuall commerce about us, we finde no Scripture to affirme; onely that they are * ſent out upon occaſion, for good. Secondly, Suppoſe our prayers mentall onely, as oft they are, and oft ſo moſt fervent; *Exod.* 14. Why cryeſt thou? Underſtand they them? Without robbing God of his incommunicable glory to be the onely Knower of hearts, they cannot affirm it; it ſhall ever be his

* Heb.1.14.

his Privelege, to be *Ex se ωφελήσεν.*

The second is, That through the incredible celerity of their nature, they do by themselves hear prayers made to them on earth?

Answ. To which *Bellarmine* answers. First, That this cannot be true of Mentall prayers, though such celerity supposed. Secondly, That to this end they may hear all prayers made to them, is requisite not onely celerity of nature, but also ubiquity, when at the same instant so many prayers are made to the same Saint; and no *Motus* is *in instanti.*

Their third is, That they see in God all things; Hence their *Speculum Trinitatis*, from the first instant of their beatitude?

Answ. And yet Christ knew not the day of Judgement, though from the first instant of his Incarnation, he enjoyed beatificall vision. Secondly, Where finde we such a *Speculum Trinitatis* mentioned in Scripture? Thirdly, Suppose such a *Speculum*; It is not *Naturale*, but *Voluntarium*, so that nothing can be thence informed, but what God will have them know.

Their fourth is Revelation, That God is pleased to reveal unto them our prayers, when we powre them out before him; And so Saints have in former times known both things to come, yea, and also secrets of hearts, as *Act.* 5.

Answ. But where finde they that God reveals to them the prayers that are made unto them? Secondly, And saith *Bellarmine*, then would the Saints pray to God sometimes to reveal to Saints

their prayers. Thirdly, And that was as likely to be vouchsafed to Patriarks, and Prophets in ancient time; when yet it is said, *Abraham knows us not, Isa.63.*

To draw to conclusion in this Point; I would but know for my learning of any Papist in the world, why I should chuse to go to God by a Saint, rather then by Jesus Christ our known Advocate? Is it because their prayers are more prevalent with God? It were blasphemy to think it: Are they more mercifull? How derogate they from that glory of the high * Priest of our profession? Or is it more humility?

*Heb.2.& 4.

Answ. It is pride, not humility that shews it self in such will-worship, *Col.2.* And what, is the condition of Saints in new Testament inferiour to that of them in the old? If they without any such ambages might approach unto God immediately, why not we rather, when Christ appears for us at the right hand of our Father? *Roman. 8. Heb.7.*

And if there were nothing else might breed in us detestation of Popery, this yet alone should; seeing it so robs God of his honour, of mercie, gratuitous love to man, omniscience, &c. communicating it in equality, or greater measure unto creatures; Christ of his meritorious intercession, and of his propriety in mediating twixt God and us? see 1 *Tim.* 2. 5.

I beseech you, brethren, think of these things. First, We serve a gracious, and a mercifull God, who stiles himself the * *Hearer of prayers.* Secondly,

*Psal.65.2.

condly, we have a mercifull high * Priest, touched, *let us go boldly to the throne of grace*, with our infirmities. Thirdly, For this we have warrant by * mandate, and promise, which we lack for intercession of Saints. Fiftly, Encouragements we have plentifull, *He gives to all liberally, and * upbraids no man*. Fiftly, *Frustra fit per plura quod fieri potest per pauciora; Tutius ad meum Iesum loquor, quam ad quemvis sanctorum spiritum, Austin.* Sixtly, Whether, or how Saints hear our prayers, it is uncertain, and unresolved amongst some Papists themselves; Why holds not the rule true? *Tene certum, dimitte incertum.* That God hears our prayers, rightly qualified, we know, by his omniscience, immensity, ubiquity, &c. we know also by experience; we know by his protestation, &c. But that Saints do hear them, we know not.

* Heb. 2. 18. & 4. 15.

* Psal. 50. 15.

* Iam. 1. 5.

Secondly, As in the misapplying of this honour from God to Saints, is idolatry; so in the neglect of it is crime no lesse then Atheisme, *Psal.* 14. 4. and detainment of service which we owe to our God; wherein I wish our people were not all obnoxious, and culpable.

How many families in this Congregation, where prayer to God is a stranger as which passeth all measure of impiety? How many persons, who, except in the Church, scarce ever have minde of prayer to God so much as by the shortest ejaculations?

Are we Christians? How deserve we the Stile which is this oft; *such as * call upon the Name of the Lord*; sometimes *an holy * Priesthood, to offer up spiri-*

* 1 Cor. 1. 2. and 2 Tim. 2. 19.

* 1 Pet. 2. 5.

tuall Sacrifices, acceptable to God by Iesus Christ: yea, how can we perswade our selves we have received the Spirit of Grace, if not * withall the spirit of Supplication? or how be perswaded we have the spirit of God, if we delight not in the exercise of it? *Daniel* had spirit of sanctification, yet was he constant at his * *three times a day to call upon his God*, yea then when death was present before him; *David*, * *Seven times a day:* and is not the Precept, *to pray* * *continually?* besides, there is nothing we deal with, wherein we have comfort, except thus * sanctified unto us; And if nothing else will move us, let our own Necessities, Temporall and Spirituall; for let it be granted we enjoy all things to the full in things of this life; yet how soon can God strip us of them? How can he *break the* * *staffe of bread, that we shall eat, and not be satisfied?* How can he give us up to that vanity *Solomon* speaks of, *To abound with all things, & yet to have* * *use of nothing?* How can he make them snares unto us, as the same *Solomon* speaks, *That our riches shall be reserved for* * *hurt to the owner thereof?* Especially when, as * *Agur* intimates, *Fulnesse may occasion a deniall of God, or a forgetfulnesse of him*; Whilest as *David* speaks, *Our hearts are* * *set upon them*; Whilest, as our Saviour speaks, the care in keeping, and fear in loosing * *choke the word of God*; or whilest they become fewell to feed our corruption, instruments of injustice, luxury, & what not that evill is? And for our spirituall estate, supposing us to be in highest favour with God. First, How can we suppose it, whilest in this duty we are negligent?

* Zech.12.10. Rom.8.26.
* Dan.
* Psal.
* 1 Thes.5.17.
* 1 Tim.4.5.
* Levit.26.26. Ezek.4.16. and 5.16.
* Eccles.5.19.
* Eccles.5.13.
* Pro.30.9.
* Psal.62.10.
* Matt.13.22.

Fom.

8.26. *Zec.* 12.10. Secondly, have we attain'd perfection, who can, or dare say it? *Phi.* 3.13,14. Thirdly, Have we command of grace, at our own pleasure to exercise it, or to increase it? experience of all humble hearts contradicts it; see 2 *Chron.* 32. *Psal.* 51. Fourthly, In those graces that concern sense, have we a promise of their continuance without interruption? shew me it; so peace of conscience, and joy in the holy Ghost, except perhaps we will condemn *the* * *generation of the just*; or if any such promise be so according to Letter, yet is it with limitation to our use of means, amongst which this is the Prime, Prayer unto God. * Psal. 73.15.

And if ever there were times to stir up to this duty, now are the daies, for us especially of this kingdome: The prayer that * *David* makes, is fulfilled to us; *Help Lord, for there is not one godly man left, the faithfull are minished from among the children of men:* behold and see our μεριμνῶμεν, and our μεριμνῶμεν too all in a tumult; every man seeking his own, humouring himself, * *none the things of Iesus Christ*; the cause of the Gospel few take to heart, a little sollicitous we seem to be of peace in our land; but whether Religion sink, or swim, we are generally of * *Gallio's* minde, *we care for none of those things*: but *What shall we do in the* * *end thereof?* Remedy I know none for us private men, but onely *Preces & lachrymæ*, the old weapons of the Church. * Psal. 12.1. * Phil. 2.21. * Act. 18.17. * Ier. 5.31.

The substance of Vers. 18, 19. *hath been handled before in Vers.* 14.

Δόξα μόνῳ τῷ Θεῷ ἐν τοῖς ὑψίστοις.

PSAL. 117. *vers.* 1.

O praise the Lord, all ye Nations: praise him all ye people.

Opportunely we fall upon this Psalme this * Day, wherein we celebrate the memory of those miraculous gifts conferred on the Primitive Church, especially on the Apostles, *Act.* 2. This Psalme presenting to our notice the great blessing of God in the vocation of the Gentiles; whereto that gift of Tongues tended.

* *On Whitsunday* 1637

In the words consider we three things.

First, Duty.

Secondly, Persons whom it concerns.

Thirdly, Ground of the Duty, *Vers.* 2.

Lest the Application of the Psalme to Vocation of Gentiles, seem impertinent; Read *Rom.* 15. 11. where ye shall observe the Apostle so applying it.

For farther understanding, Know that from the dayes of *Abraham* and *Iacob*, began God to limit his people to one Family and Nation; before that time, all being *Quoad jus*, The people of God: in their dayes, was God pleased, for the sinnes of

other nations, and ſpecially for love to his people, according to election, to ſingle out the ſeed of *Abraham, &c.* to be his peculiar people; and to diſtinguiſh them by ſignes from others; by ſignes, I ſay, of ſpeciall Covenant; as Circumciſion in *Abrahams* family: afterwards, the giving of the * Law, and the *ſervices*; which was the Maceria ſpoken of, the * Partition wall mentioned by the Apoſtle; inſomuch that though all other people and kingdomes of the world retained the Stile, and Title of Nations, and people at large; Yet none of the people of God, ſave *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, *Iacob*, and their poſterity; And this encloſure of grace to them, though ye reckon but from the giving of the Law to Chriſt, when the diſtinction grew compleat unto Chriſt, endured the ſpace of above ſixteen hundred yeers; what time the Jews growing to height of Impiety, were rejected of God, and in their ſtead we Gentiles graffed in, as *Rom.* 11. 17. ſo that in *Pauls* time they were Concorpores; and from that time to now have continued the onely body of Chriſt, the fulneſſe of him which filleth all in all, *Epheſ.* 1. 23.

* Rom. 9. 4.

* Epheſ. 2. 14.

So long ago was God pleaſed to foretell the Calling of the Gentiles; ſee *Pſal.* 2. and 50. and 97. What ſpeak we of ſo late as *David*? even in the very Covenant of *Abraham* it was ſignified, as *Gen.* 17. 5. and 18. 18. and in the ſigne *Rom.* 4. 11.

If the queſtion now be, Why the Lord was pleaſed ſo long ago to foretell it; Thus let him conceive. Firſt, *Prediſtio futurorum*, the foretelling

ling of things to come, I mean of Contingent things that have no cause in Nature, are no small evidence of a Deity; whereupon, *Isa.* 45. Idols are put to that issue. Secondly, The accomplishment of such Predictions are excellent nourishers of Hope concerning things to come, which we behold onely in the Promise; as *Iehu* makes the observation, * No word of God shall fall to the ground; many gracious Promises are given us, which yet are not performed, &c. Thirdly, Besides, God meant from the beginning of the Covenant to nourish his people Israel in the fear of his Name, not willing to give them least occasion of being puffed up with Pride in respect of his speciall favour; Wherefore also they are often afterwards by the Ancients of the Prophets put in minde of it, see *Hos.* 1.

* 2 King. 10. 10.

That a man would wonder, save that blindnesse is come upon Israel in part, to read how Jews of old, and to this day are averse from the doctrine, which teacheth entertainment of Gentiles into the Church of God: If ye read the story of the Gospel, there was nothing went more harsh in Christs doctrine, then this of taking away the kingdome from the Jews: and when *Paul* the Apostle of the Gentiles, *Act.* 13 and 28. preached this doctrine, he alwayes became unsufferable: But thus deserve they to be blinded in plainest things, that refuse obedience to the will of God.

Other Errors there are noted of like nature. First, Of Donatists in Saint *Austins* dayes, whose doctrine was, That God had no Church but in

Afrique, and that in the party of *Donatus*. Secondly, Exactly ye shall observe the same errour revived by Papists and Brownists: Papists labouring for an enclosure of the Church to their *Rome*, thereto alledge that which specially thwarts it, the Title of *Catholique*; for if Catholique, then not Romane no more then Jewish; that tearm being devised by Ancients, especially, to distinguish the Church Christian from that of the Jews: And if to all Nations, then not to *Africa* onely, or to the part of *Donatus*, for all Nations must praise God for his mercy; and therefore no necessity for any man to submit himself to *Donatus*, or *Browne*, or Saint *Peter* himself; though it be true, out of the Church is no salvation, yet out of this or that Church is salvation, except Christ be not the Saviour of his whole Bodie.

But those things which the Lord so long ago foretold to our fathers by the Prophets he hath fulfilled to us their children; making us who once were Aliens and Strangers from the Covenants of Promise, *nigh to himself by the blood of Christ; To this end tended that gift of Tongues, *Act.* 2. The memory whereof we this day Celebrate; For in that so many Nations heard the Apostles speak in their own tongues the manifold works of God, it serves to shew, that God meant now to verifie his Promise to us: I say onely as * *Paul*, Let us Gentiles praise God for his Mercy.

*Eph.2.12,13.

* Rom.15.11.

Verse.

Verse II.

For his mercifull kindnesse is great towards me.

IN these words we have the ground of *Davids* thanksgiving, and praysing God.

First, Gods Mercy.

Secondly, The Measure of it, Great.

My purpose is not to insist, on this occasion, in the common place of Gods mercy; Thus onely for so much as concernes the Sense of the Scripture: The mercy of God some call the property, or attribute of his Nature, inclining him to relieve the misery of his Creature; some, the Essence of God shewing mercy; Trueth is, there is no Reall difference twixt his Essence and his Attributes, save onely in our manner of conceiving; The Trueth of God, and his Essence are not two things, but in our apprehension, no more is his Power, Omniscience, &c.

This Mercy of God is of three sorts.

First, Generall towards all Creatures wrapped in misery, whereof see *Psal.* 145.9.

Secondly, Speciall towards men, 1 *Tim.*4.10. preserving them from many dangers, yea, relieving their miseries with service of his other Creatures; see *Matth.* 5.45.

Thirdly, Singular to his Church; not onely in giving them means of salvation, and deliverance from Curse, but to many of them vouchsafing the sense of his choisest favours, in remission of sins,

gifts of the Spirit, and life everlasting; And hereof speaks the Prophet in this place: for these are the benefits which Christ brings to his Church.

As if there were no mercy of God like unto this, The mercy that he shews unto us in Christ: and surely consider all other miseries, we shall see none like this, *To be without Christ*, for the Reasonable Creature. Secondly, The amplifications it hath in Scripture. Thirdly, The kinds of mercy in him vouchsafed us. For the first, Goe over all the miseries of the brute Creatures, and compare them with the misery of man without Christ, ye shall see, they all come short of it: *The* * *Lions lack, and suffer hunger*; It is true, but suppose them pined with hunger, yet with their life ends their misery; When a man *out of Christ* hath endured Hunger, and Cold, and Nakednesse, and Fire and Water, or what ever man can devise to be most terrible to Flesh, yet is it but a Flea-bite to the misery whereto a man out of Christ is subject; *their* * *Worme dies not, their fire goes not out*; which made our Saviour say, It was better with losse of Lim, or Life to go to heaven, then enjoying all the pleasures of this life, at death to be cast into hell.

*Psal.34.10.

*Mar.9.44.

Secondly, Look again to the amplifications it hath in Scripture; He denied all these to * Angels; they fell, and no Redeemer: He denied these to many men, even to so many as had * *not knowledge of his Lams*. Thirdly, In his very Church though offer be made to all, yet actuall performance, and taste onely to the Church of the faithfull

*Heb.2.16.

*Psal.147.20.

full, the first borne whose *names are written in heaven, ; All are not * Israel, that are of Israel. * Heb. 12. 23. * Rom. 9. 6.

Thirdly, Thinke of the excellency of the blessings. First, Remission of sinnes see David * celebrating; and if ever thou have tasted how bitter conscience of sinne is, thou wilt taste, and acknowledge also how over-gracious the Lord is therein unto thee. Secondly, Besides, the gifts of the Spirit, and gracious endowments, whereby we are renewed after his Image: and that which passeth knowledge, the fulnesse of Joy reserved for us at the right hand of God. * Psal. 32. 1, 2.

This taxeth that earthly, or rather brutish estimate that men set on this prime mercy of God, preferring before it the worst of those favors they partake in common with Heathens, with Devills, with brute Creatures, with Hypocrites.

How many be there even of a brutish disposition in the Church of God, who never have thought of Heaven, or Hell, God, or the Devill; Let them have meat, and drinke, and ease to the fill, as * Paul, and * Isaiah speak, it is their *Summum bonum*; and yet the very heathen could say, It was the thought of a Beast, rather then of a Man: And have ye not heard of him who had all these things, and yet * afterwards was in Hell in torments: or can you forget our Saviour? when all is had that the world can afford you in profit, or pleasure, yet what shall your advantage be, when you must loose your * Soul? and have ye not heard of them, who cry out What hath pride * profited them, or what the pompe of Riches availed? * 1 Cor. 15. 32. * Is. 28. * Luke 16. * Matt. 16. 24. * Wisd. 5. 8.

Goe

Go farther to other gifts of God in providence; Suppose it be Art, Whose is like that of *Aristotle*? Suppose it kingdomes, Whose like to that of *Assyria*, or *Grecia*, or *Persia*, or *Rome*? Suppose it wisedome, as that of *Achitophel*, the Oracle of Israel? Yet what is all this, without the * knowledge of Christ, save onely to deprive of excuse? see *Rom.* 1 and 1 *Cor.* 1.21.

* Phil.3.8.

Go yet farther to the power of Knowledge, and Faith, and of deep Mysteries in the Gospel; the very * Devils herein equall, excell us; and though we had all Knowledge, and Faith, What were it without Christ? as Saint *Paul* speaks in the point of Charity, 1 *Cor.* 13.2.

* Iam.2.19.

Yet farther, for I thinke Hypocrites go farther then Devills; suppose thou hast morall Honesty, as * Pharisees had; yet must there be a righteousnesse greater to bring thee to God: Suppose thou hadst * Prophecy, yet mayest thou be dismissed with *ne scio vos, I never knew you*: Suppose all those excellent endowments, *Heb.*6. without the knowledge of Gods mercy to thee in Christ, What doth all this adde to thee, except an aggravation to thy damnation?

*Matth.5.20.

*Matth.7.22.23

Lord, methinks therefore that I might enamore you of love towards this mercy of God in Christ Jesus, and prevaile with you aright to esteeme it: Saint *Paul* when he comes to speak of it never * satisfies himself in it; desires to know nothing but Christ, and him Crucified; accounts all but Dung, and * Drosse in comparison; and again, *Eph.*3.19. *it passeth knowledge*. This being enamord on it is, if not

* 1 Cor. 2.9.

* Psal.3.8.

not an evidence of our sharing in it, yet a step towards it.

Before ever we shall come to know the price of it, Three things must be removed out of our hearts, which are naturall to most men, to all men, one or other.

First, Ignorance of our misery in Nature without Christ; my meaning is That we either know not, or consider not what punishment our sins have deserved, or how strict the justice of God is against them: For remedy whereof I would prescribe; First, Diligent examination of our lives by the Law of God; Lord, how many fowle sins should the greatest Civilian in the world then perceive in himself? Secondly, The punishments threatned therein, Gods *curse in body, in soul, in this life, in the life to come. Thirdly, The exemplification of the curse, and the execution upon the breakers of it; extraordinary upon other men tainted with our vices; insomuch that there is no grosse violation of any Law of God, but we have seen exemplified on others, might see them in our selves. Fourthly, The strictnesse of Gods justice, which without satisfaction, which indeed is satisfaction every way equivalent to the violation of Justice, accepts none to mercy: And this methinks should teach us how to esteem of Christ.

* Deut. 28. Gal. 3. 10.

A second cause is, Opinion of our owne possibility to make satisfaction to Gods justice; wherewith the whole world of Pagans furnish them with Presidents; thence grew sacrificings of Pagans of Sonnes and Daughters; thence all those

whippings,&c. in the Church of *Rome*, thereby to satisfie the justice, and wrath of God due to Sins; the same point. For Remedy let us see whether according to Reason, or Scripture we can possible make amends for sinnes of our souls. First, The Majesty violated is Infinite. Secondly, What
*1 Chro.29.14 give we more then * God hath given us? Thirdly, What *indebitum?* as Papists themselves confesse it must be, *Luk.*17.10. Fourthly, What *perfectum?* which is the point; so that if God should enter into Judgement with us, we had not need to pray for mercy in acceptance, rather then dream of making him satisfaction. Fifthly, Who can
*Psal.19.12. tell how *oft he offendeth? our Good-works for the matter of them are easily numbred, our sinnes are past number; that this we must let alone, for ever thought of satisfying Gods justice, without a Mediatour.

A third cause, That we never yet were sensibly arraigned in our Consciences for our sinnes, nor for misery in Nature, nor disability to make amends for sinnes of our souls by own strength naturall, or gracious: thence is it, that we know not aright to price the mercy of God to us in Jesus Christ. Beloved Christians, To sin is common; to feel burthen of sinne is, if not a speciall, yet a rare benefit: that though I say not Reprobates may feel it, and so heavy that it presseth them to Hell, as *Cain* and *Iudas*, yet surely it is rare amongst the people of God; so that I begin to be of opinion, that those graces common to us with some Castawayes grow marvellous rare amongst the

people of God: Judge of it by these evidences. First, The ventrousnesse of some men into grossest sinnes for profit, pleasure, or honours sake. Secondly, The little, or no griefe they worke when they are committed. Thirdly, The lesse care of making peace with God by Jesus Christ, the * trampling of his Grace, and mercy under our feet. Fourthly, That common abuse of it in the vulgar, as if they thought his death had purchased an indulgence, rather then a pardon for sin: But oh that we could learn to prize it aright; How might we hope it should stil continue amongst us! but as the base esteem of it amongst Jews remooved it to Gentiles; so *è contrà*, may the base esteem thereof amongst the Gentiles remoove it back again to the Jews; see *Rom.* 11.24. Consider what I say, and the Lord give you a right understanding in all things. * Heb.10.29.

Verse. II.

And the trueth of the Lord endureth for ever, praise ye the Lord.

THere be Three sorts of Trueth. First, Metaphysicall, whereby things are truely what they seem, or are conceived; or have the Trueth, and Reality of that Essence which is conceived of them; so God is the Living and *true God; And Idols false gods, see 1 *Cor.*8.4. Secondly, A Logicall Trueth, which is the conformity of the conceptions of the minde with the things as they are, * 1 Thes.1.9.

and of the words wherein those things are enunciated, see *Rom.* 3.3,4. so God is true, truely conceiving, and enunciating things as they are. Thirdly, Ethicall Truth, the congruence of all our words with the things, and our conceptions, and of our facts with our intentions, and pretenses: So here principally understand *David* signifies; First, That the Lord truely, and according to the very trueth of things avoucheth whatsoever he avoucheth, and that without all doubling. Secondly, Promissory, which commonly we call the faithfulnesse of God; and it stands in two things. First, The Concord of his Intention with his Promise. Secondly, The answerablenesse of the fact to the promise infallible; and hereof speaks the Prophet.

And it is said, *To last for ever*; because to eternity, and without alteration he is faithfull, and true, and unalterably in all times makes good whatsoever he hath promised.

If any shall say, that after this life, when all promises are performed, there is no use of such Fidelity?

Answ. Distinguish the vertue from the exercise. Secondly, To all eternity there is use of Gods fidelity; for that his Saints Continue in their blessednesse, is by vertue of his promise, and fidelity; wherefore Divines also have said, There is some kinde of faith that lasts in heaven, which they call *fidem dependentiæ.*

Thus farre of explication. Now that God is thus true, and faithfull in performing all his purposes,

poses, and promises according to his own intention, Scriptures are plentifull, see *Deut.*7.9. *Dan.*9. 4. not a word goes out of his mouth but is exactly performed, see *Iosh.*21.45. and 23.14. 2 *Chron.*6. 14, 15. 2 *King.* 10. 10. Circumstances exactly kept, conferre *Gen.*15.13. and *Exod.*12.41. yea, as his mercy extends to good, and bad, so his faithfulnesse oft to them that deal perfidiously in his Covenant, see *Rom.*3.3,4. Exemplifications see plentifull in the story of Scripture.

This point needs rather * explication, then proof.

* See 2 Thess. cap.3. ver.3. pag.233,234. 235. where this very point is handled, and repeated. *Item* pag.18. & pag. 210. *ibidem.*

Object. Where is the promise of his comming? see 2 *Pet.*3.4.

Answ. First, Times and Seasons he hath kept in his own power, *Act.*1.7. Secondly, Where is thy Reason? He comes not yet, therefore will never come.

Object. How the promise of Temporalities made good, 1 *Tim.* 4.8.

Answ. Take them with their intended *modus*, and ye shall see they are all exactly performed. First, They are not intended to be performed, but on condition that we demean our selves as becomes Gods children, see *Psal.*89.31,32. Secondly, Not, but with limitation to expediency; so farre as they may advance our spirituall good; so thought *Agur*, *Pro.* 30.8. Thirdly, With reservation of Power to the promiser; either to chasten particular delinquencies of his children; or to prove, and try them as seems best unto him, as *Iob*; and *Mar.* 10.30. or else to pay in the kinde, or in

the equivalent, and by conversion in *melius* &c.

Object. But what of Spirituall blessings, they are surely absolutely promised?

Answ. There is certainely much misprision among Gods people; Give me leave therefore a little distinctly to explicate, how Spirituall blessings are convayed in the promise: They are of two sorts; I mean so farre as they are in this life vouchsafed. First, Some are as it were the recompense of our Service. Secondly, Some the qualifications to the Service of God, or the Service it self.

Of the first sort we reckon the Peace of Conscience, and joy of the holy Ghost, whereof see *Gal.* 6.16. *Rom.*14. and 15. Peace and comfort in beleeving. Secondly, These are not promised Absolutely; But first with limitation to expediency; according to the divers tempers of mens inclinations: some there are whom feeling of these favors continually, perhaps would encourage to licentiousnesse, so headstrong is their naturall inclination to evill; those God withholds these comforts from, and leads them on not without the terrours of a troubled minde to continue in his fear: Some again of a melting, and tender disposition, whom rigour would discourage, onely mildnesse, and comfort incline to obedience; to these doth God proportion another kinde of promoting. Secondly, Even herein hath God reserved power to chasten the scandalous sinnes of his people; Wherefore it is that *David* so oft complains of the *Terrours he felt in his soul. Thirdly, Withall, his

*Psal.88.15,16.

Liberty

Liberty to make good by way of exchange, as thus; Though he grant thee not so much peace, and comfort, yet perhaps he gives thee more fear of his Name; more Care to depart from evill: and ye may observe in many of Gods people, who to this day were never able to apply the promises, nor scarce ever knew by experience what Peace of Conscience meant, that yet their lives are most holy, they are readiest in good-works, scrupulous of sinnes that many others swallow up. Fourthly, To put their faith to the Proof; for who beleeves not what he feeles? Fifthly, And where finde we, that the Time, and Season is here limited; *Peace shall be upon them, Gal.6.16.* and yet perhaps they feel it not till the houre of their death; many such I have knowne. Sixthly, And universally thus conceive: No man can shew that God hath so bound himself by promise, as to exhibite these favours to his children. First, Either in like measures. Secondly, Or without interruption: But with these limits know it is true; mercy shall be upon you, and peace as upon the Israel of God.

There are a second sort of Spirituall blessings which God hath promised; which serve to qualifie them to the Service of himself, and in exercise whereof Gods Service stands; such are Faith, Hope, Charity, &c. All these are promised to the Vessells of mercy; but *de modo quæritur*; the question is of the manner. First, That their perfection is not in this life to be expected; nor their freedome from mixture with their imperfections; and conflict with them in their exercise, during state of

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this life: Shew me where God hath promised, Faith without doubting, Feare without security, &c. Reasons of it are; First, To preserve humility. Secondly, To shew that they are not availeable to justifie us. Again, in these gifts we consider Two things. First, *Essentiam*. Secondly, *Gradum*. A Competency of the gifts God hath promised to all his servants; see 1 *Cor*. 1.8. yet not promised to give to all Equality of Degrees and Measures; not to all *Abrahams* ὑπομονὴ, and *Moses* his meekness, nor *Iobs* patience, &c. Reasons are much what as in the Body. First, Every ones office, and imployment require them not, 1 *Cor*. 12. Secondly, God would by this make us carefull of the means both to beget, and nourish Grace within us, *Eph*. 4. 12. *&c*. Thirdly, We distinguish *habitum & exercitium*; the habits are permanent, the acts and exercise are oft interrupted. Fourthly, Diversities there are of eminence in all kinds of spirituall gifts; in some, more Knowledge, lesse Affection; in some, more Affection then Knowledge; in some, more Mercy, in some, more Humility, Meekness, Temperance, &c. they are not of them behinde in any gifts, yet many behinde others in measures of some gifts, see *Phil*. 2. And thus understand, ye shall be forced to confesse, God is Faithfull and true; unalterably such, and infallibly making good to all his Servants whatsoever he hath promised.

And this reproves our doubtings sometimes no lesse then quarrelsome, and churlish concerning the Trueth, and faithfulnes of our gracious God; with

who though he be ἀψευδὴς, *Tit.1.2.* yet is oft charged with breach of promise to his children. And ye may observe it to issue from one of these two grounds. First, Misunderstanding. Secondly, Misapplication of the Promises. For the first, How many be there who conceive these promises made absolutely, when yet, as you have heard, made with limitation? &c. especially when they reflect upon spirituall blessings; For example, Do these things, ye shall make your *Calling sure; we have done, yet are not assured. Secondly, Peace of Conscience shall follow them, *Gal. 6. 16.* yet scarce ever attain they the benefit in their greatest study of New life. Thirdly, Temporalls with the straitest hand reached to them: Understand ye unwise amongst the people; these are not simply promised, but, as ye have heard above explained. * 2 Pet.1.10.

As for Misapplication, that ye shall observe of Two sorts. First, One respects their person. Secondly, The other their state, and behaviour. First, Persons, they mistake the qualification of the persons; supposing the outward forme of religion sufficient to interest them in the Promises: as they did, *Rom. 2. Mal.3.* and *Ier. 7.* whereas they are not Jews who are so outward; nor is the promise made to the Ceremony, but to the Substance of Piety, *2 Tim.2.* Yea, even among them never so exact, yet shall ye see misapplication: I am perswaded there are many think themselves Gods Children, who are not so; such as feel flitting motions of Grace, and some Knowledge, and Faith, and outward Reformation; see *Heb.6.* Shall God

be thought unfaithfull, because to them the promises are not performed? It was never intended to any, but to *Nathaniels*, to Israelites indeed.

Secondly, in respect of Behaviour; for I would suppose thee a childe of God; yet as *David* and *Peter*, in particulars exorbitant; perhaps thou never hadst comforts of spirit, Peace of Conscience, cheaerfull exercise of other gracious gifts, &c. What then? is God therefore unfaithfull? yea, *Let God be* * *true, and every man a lyar*; he never meant those comforts, no, not to his own servants, but whil'st they demeaned themselves as servants; If therefore thou have failed in thy behaviour; either breaking out to scandalous sin; or swelling with Pride, inclined to Presumption; or neglecting means to cherish Grace, &c. sayest thou God is unfaithfull? rather say, That thou thy self hast failed in the defect of thine own due qualification.

* Rom. 3.4.

Build we our selves in firme expectation of all good things promised, so farre as they are promised, seem Nature and ordinary Course never so opposite; so did * *Abraham, &c.* There are foure degrees of confidence. First, When no means competent, at least apparent, as in the case of *Elisha*. Secondly, When means weak, as in Case of many. Thirdly, when no means, as in our Saviour. Fourthly, When means are opposite, as in *Abraham*: Give me that Faith that rests on naked promise of God.

* Rom. 4.18,19

This is amongst those vertues, which admit resemblance in the Creature: The faithfull God ownes not perfidious Children. Mans fidelity hath a Twofold relation. First, To God; God

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not onely bindes himself to us by promise, but we to God have covenanted our obedience; How ready are we failing of what we desire, to charge God foolishly? when either we mistake the quality, or manner of the Promise; or else, a thousand to one failed in our Restipulation. Secondly, To man; and binds with * losse to support credit of Fidelity: Oh tell it not in *Gath*, that our Christians are as * *Ieremies Iews*, every brother will deceive, and every neighbour deale treacherously. When shall that golden age returne, that the Argument may againe proceed? *Sacerdos est, non fallet, Christianus est, non mentietur. Da Deus verax, & fidelis in promissis. &c.*

* Psal. 15. 4.

* Ier. 9. 4, 5.

Δόξα Θεῷ μόνῳ.

FINIS.